LULLABY OF DEAD SPIRITS

HIDESHI HINO

Prologue

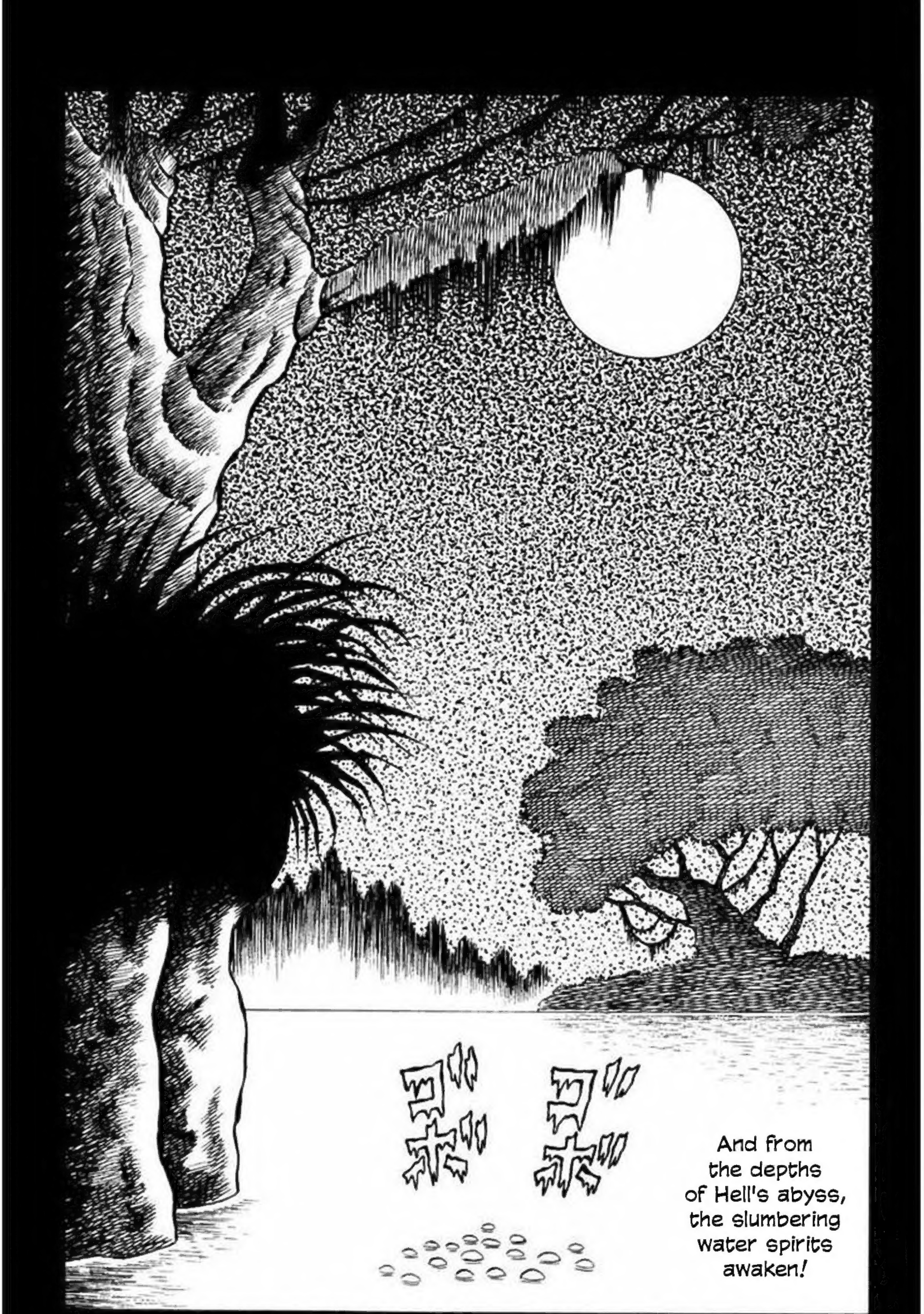
PRAYER TO BANISH DEMONS

Beneath the crimson Torii gate...

In the dark swamp's embrace...

A solitary black lily blooms in the night...

The full moon is the color of blood...


And from
the depths
of Hell's abyss,
the slumbering
water spirits
awaken!

The water spirit's pull a large shell from the depths of the abyss, that radiates a kaleidoscope of colors as it is pried wide open...

But alas, do not be deceived by her enchanting beauty!

From within the shell emerges a maiden so lovely she could be mistaken for a celestial angel!

Beneath her mask of beauty hides the venomous fangs of a wicked spirit of Hell...

For in her true form she is the embodiment of Hell's flesh-eating demons.

Is the Princess of Hell...

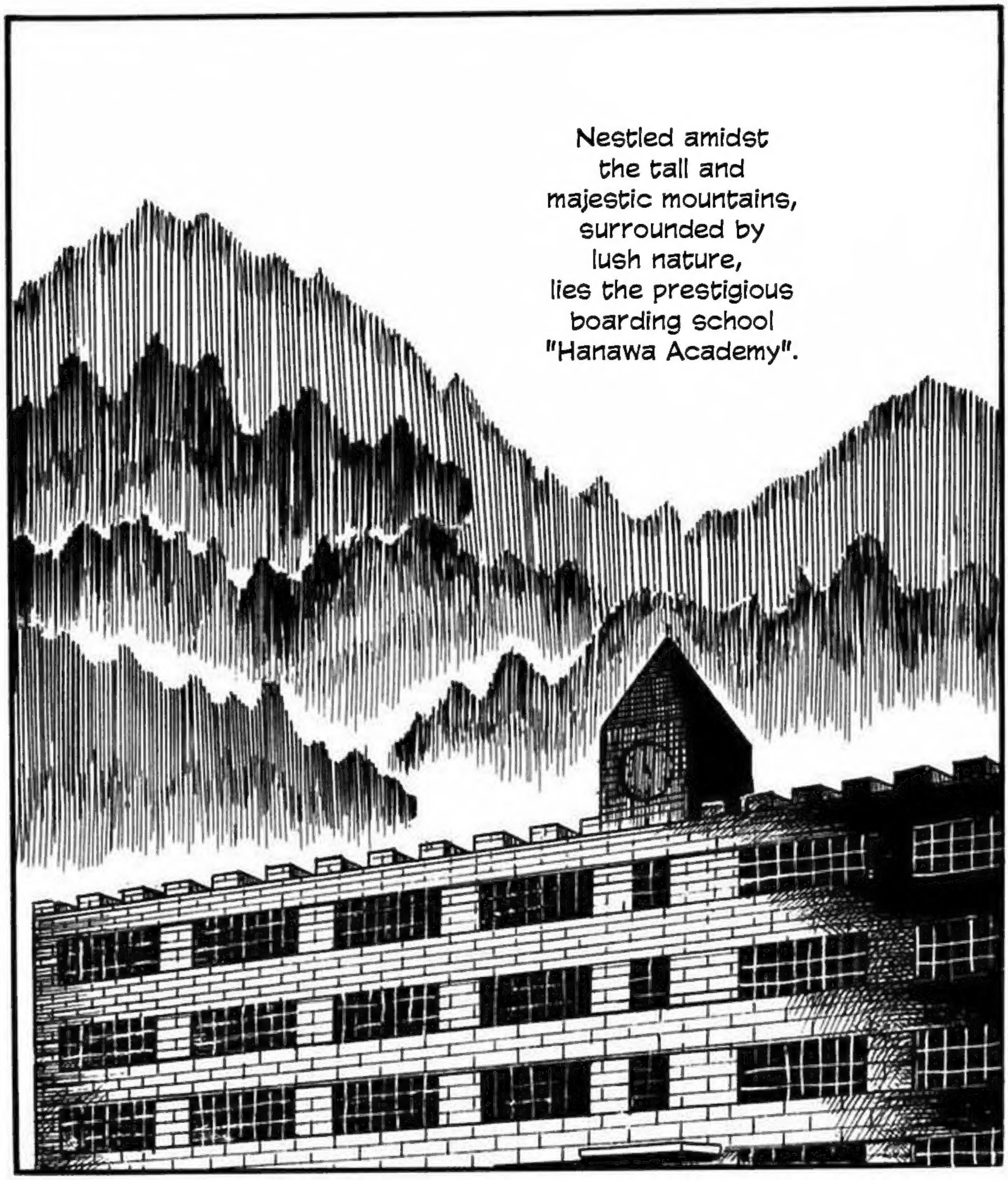
This woman...

死霊の数え唄

日野日出志

★この作品はフィクションであり、実在の個人・団体等にはいっさい関係ありません。

1 The Illustrious Hanawa Academy

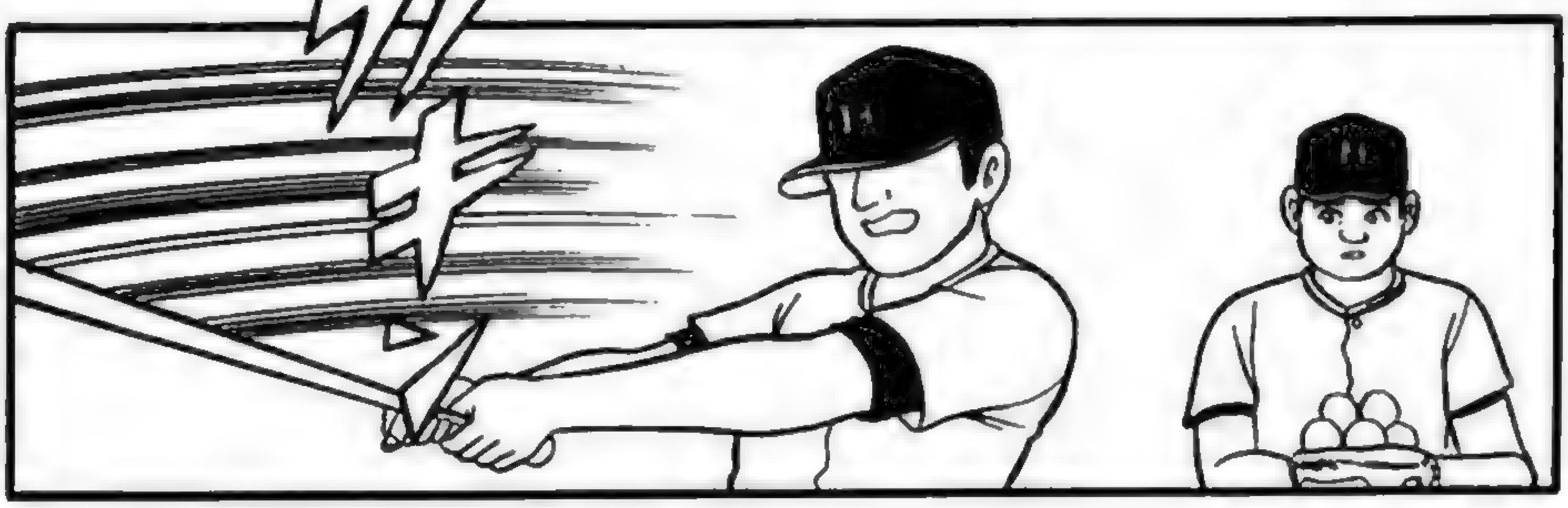


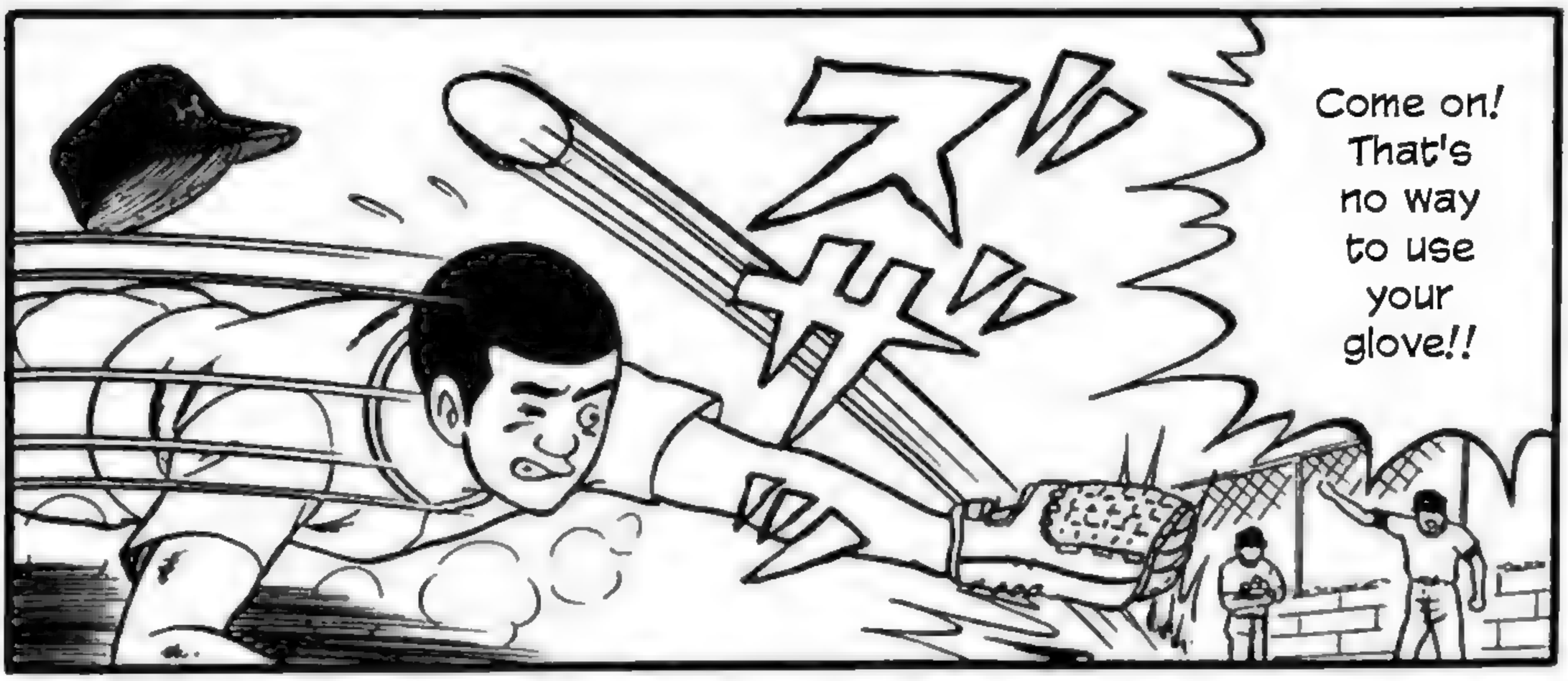
A school that fosters a students independence and emphasizes sports and community activities.

Hey, come on! Stop messing around...!!

Pant Pant

Hey! Your kick needs to pack more punch!!
The most talented individuals from all over the country attend the school.

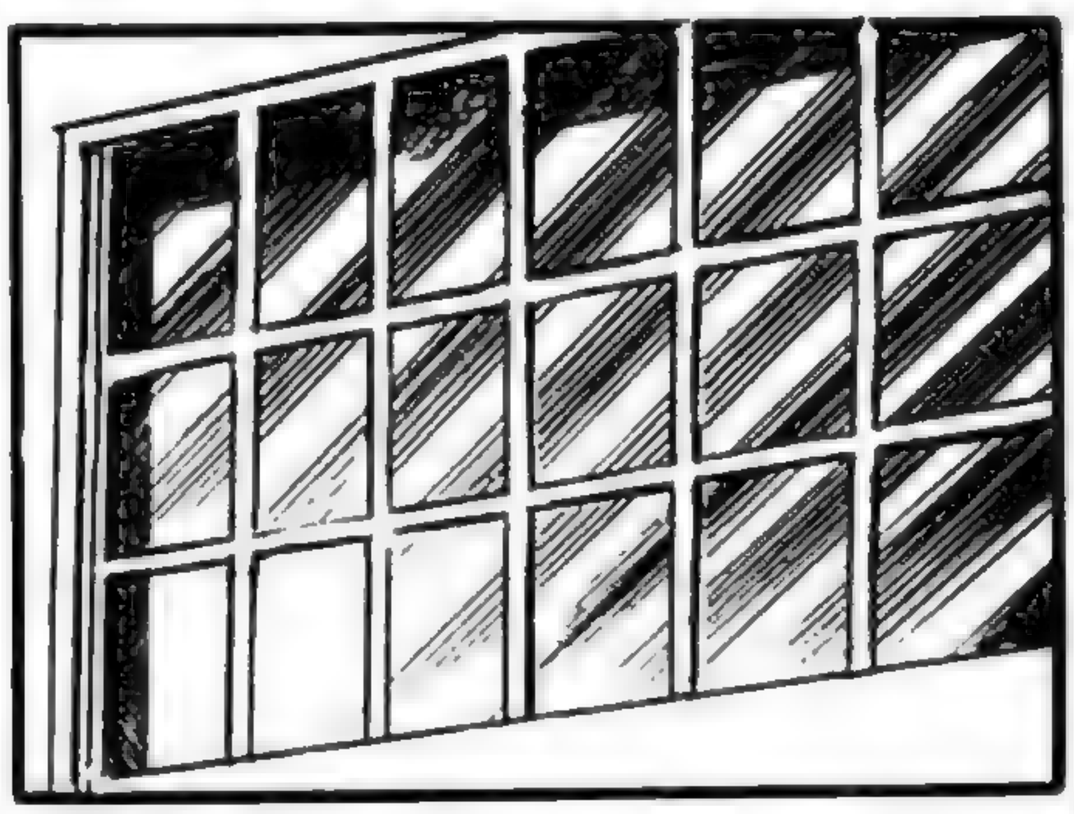


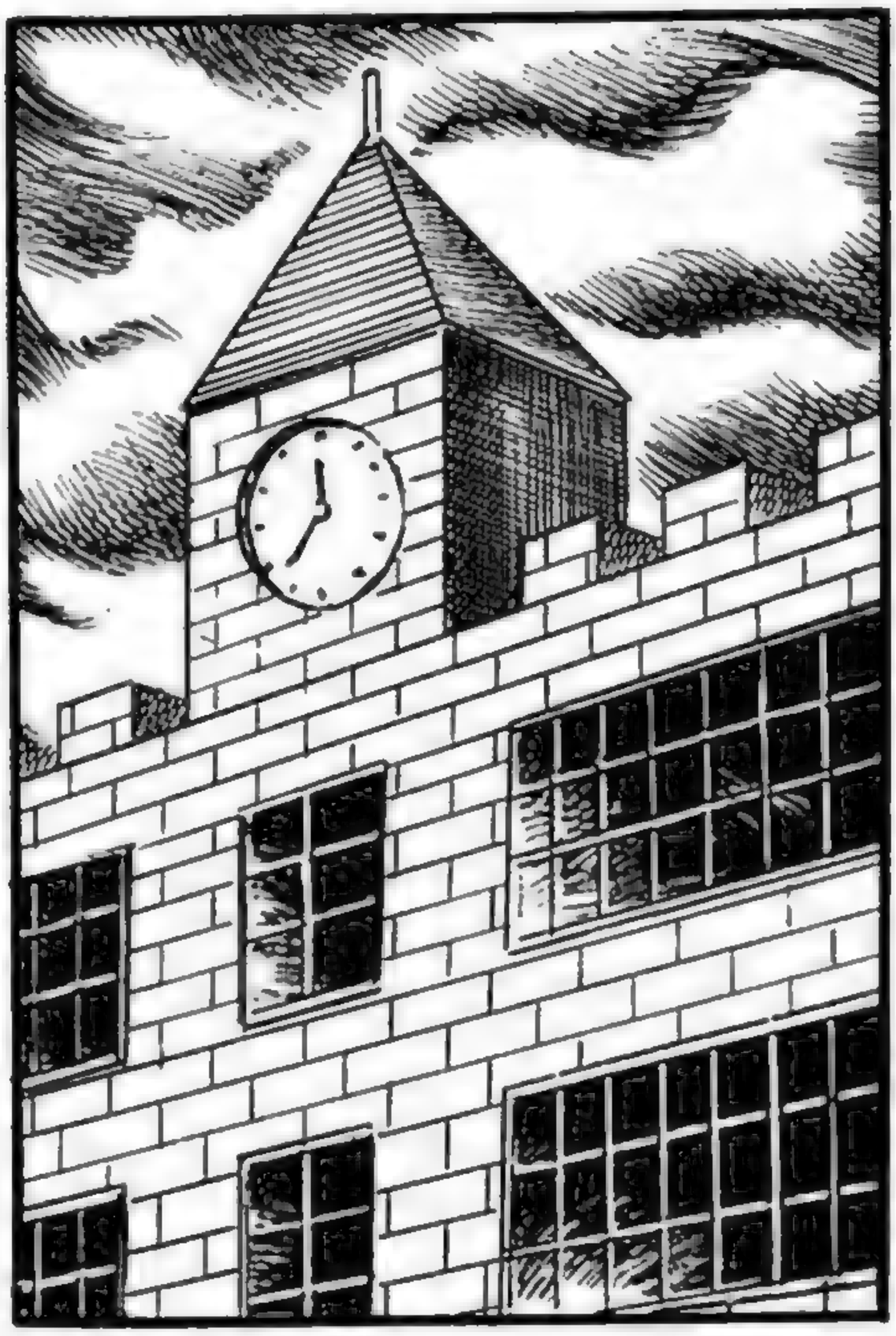

Come on! That's no way to use your glove!!

Life at the school is vibrant and lively!

Great! Now stretch your limbs to the fullest!!

A school that is renowned across the nation!





Ha
Ha
Ha...

Rejected!!
Rejected!!

What
is
this?!

Of course I have!!

You've rejected these too...

Uh...

Well, have a look! I got nothing to say!!

What's wrong Aki?

No! I don't want to look!!

Oh...

What on Earth...?!

Right...!!

We can't publish such scandalous and indecent photos!!

These are for a feature article about our girls' gymnastics team, the favorites to win the national championship!

I'm on a quest for the essence of feminine beauty...

Come on! They're not indecent!!

Your naughty intentions are pretty obvious!

What do you mean feminine beauty?!

This is too much!!

!!!

!!!

You want me to redo it right?! A total re-shoot!

OK! OK! I get it!!

Let me see!!

Oh wow! These are pretty, um... alluring!

Huh?! You don't need these do you?

Me too! Hee Hee...!!

Well, if you won't use them, can I have 'em?!

You guys are just so horrible!!

Too much!!

Really?!

Really? They're not that bad, are they?!

It would bring a disgrace to our newspaper!!

2 The Beautiful Transfer Student

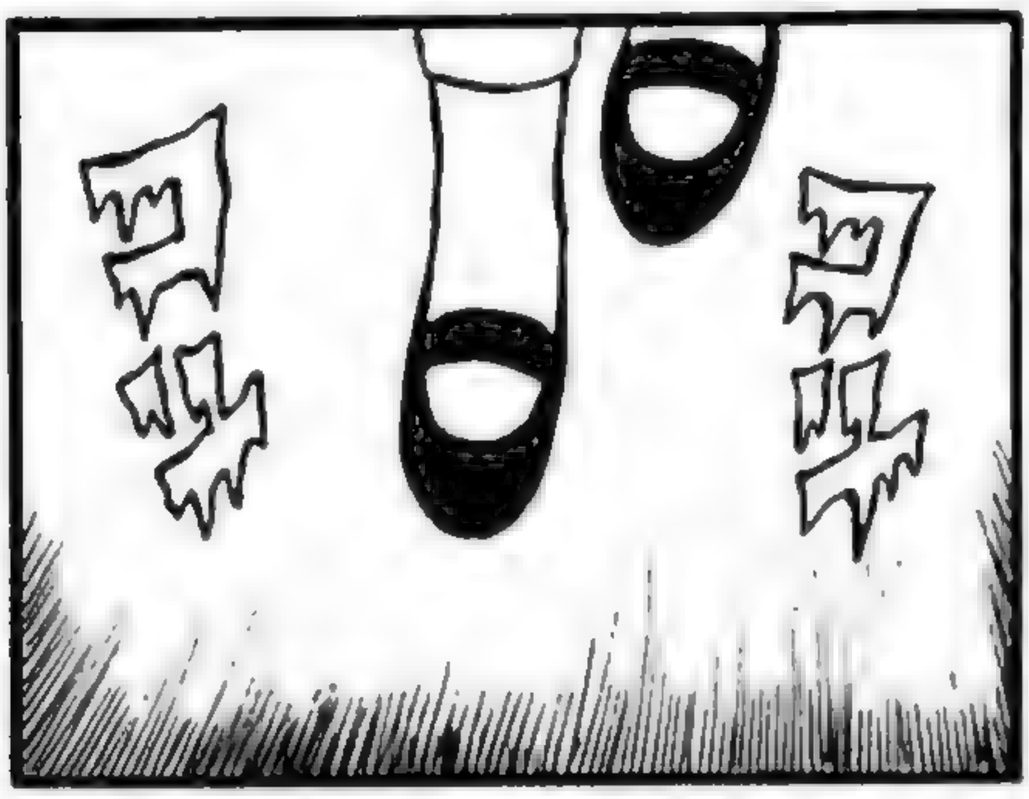
Year 1 Class 3

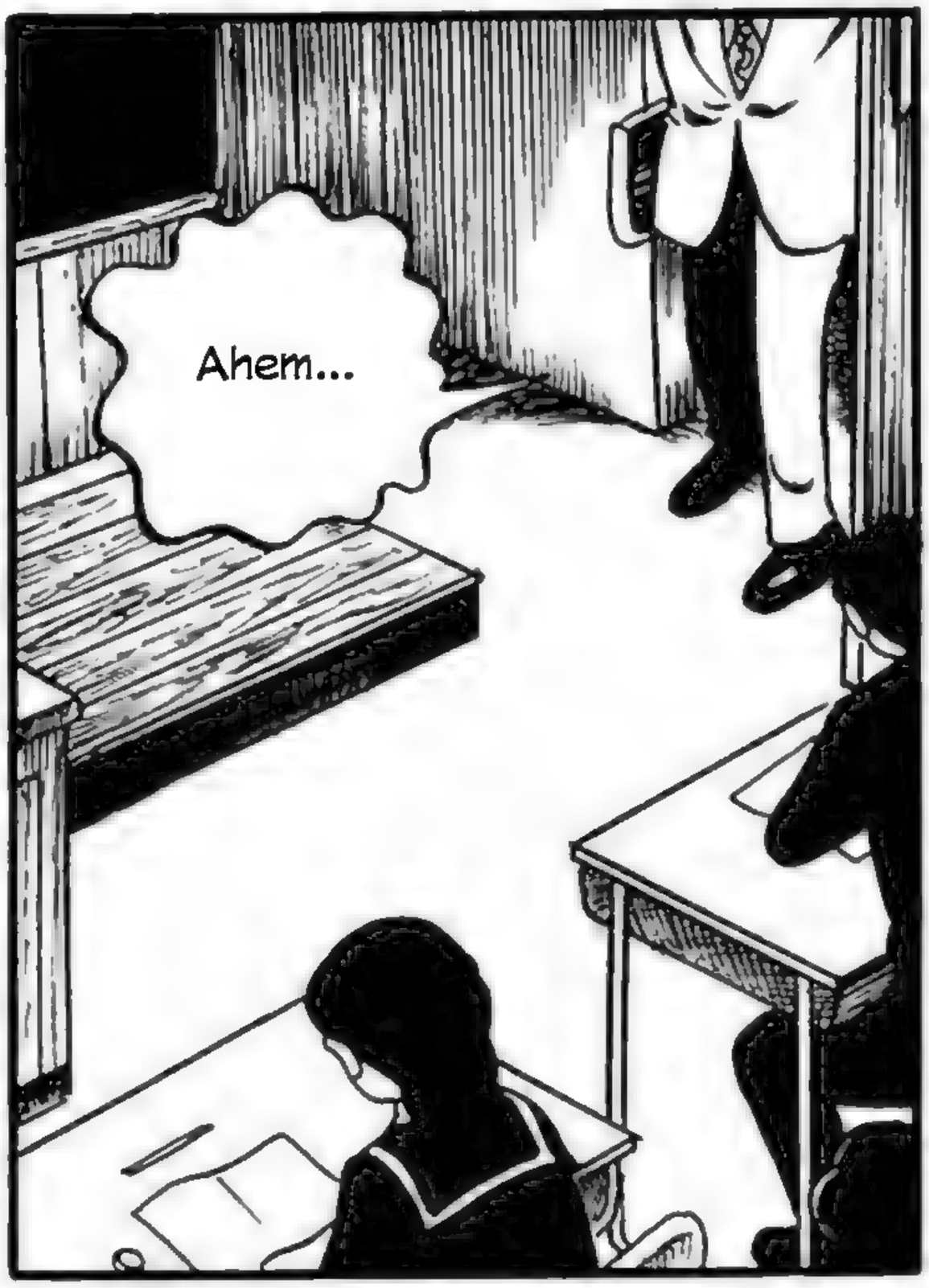
Really?!
No way!
Hey...did you hear, there's a real stunning transfer student starting today!

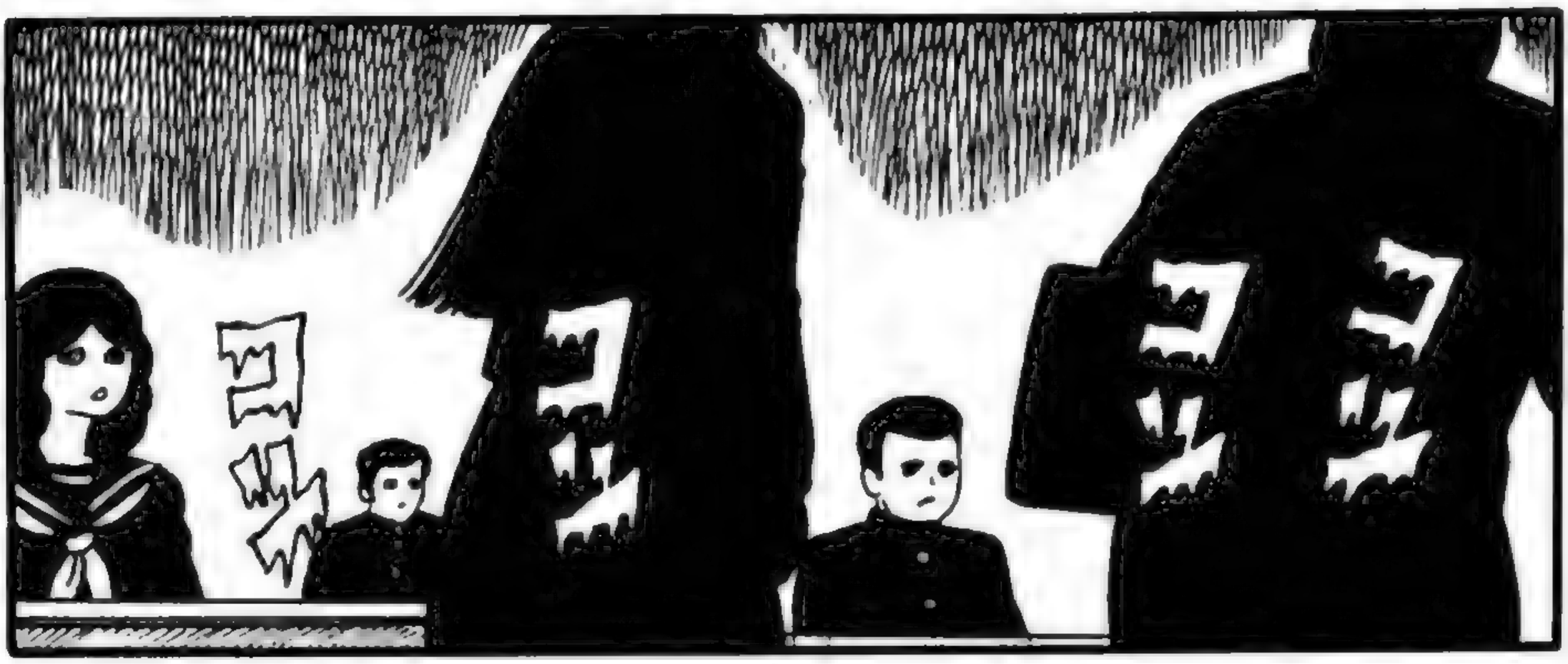
I swear! I heard the teachers in the staff room talking about her!
...

ガガガ
Oh! Here she comes...!!

...




Ahem...



ざわ ざわ
Whoa... She's a real knockout!

So pretty...!!
ざわ ざわ

...!!

!!

OK class... Let me introduce the new transfer student!

YURI KURONUMA

Nice to meet you all! I am Yuri Kuronuma!

Nice to meet you...!!

Nice to meet you...!!

Hahaha

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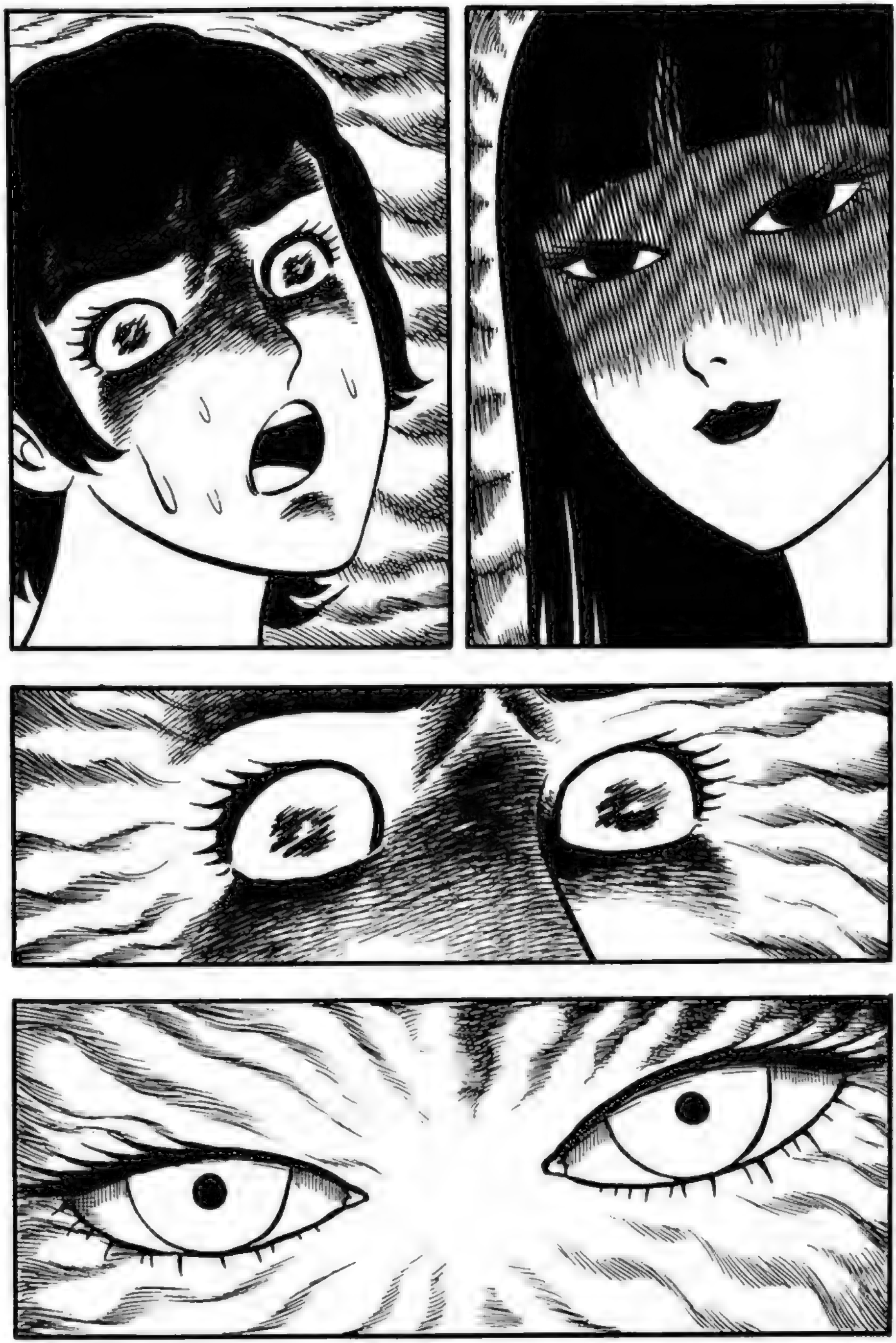
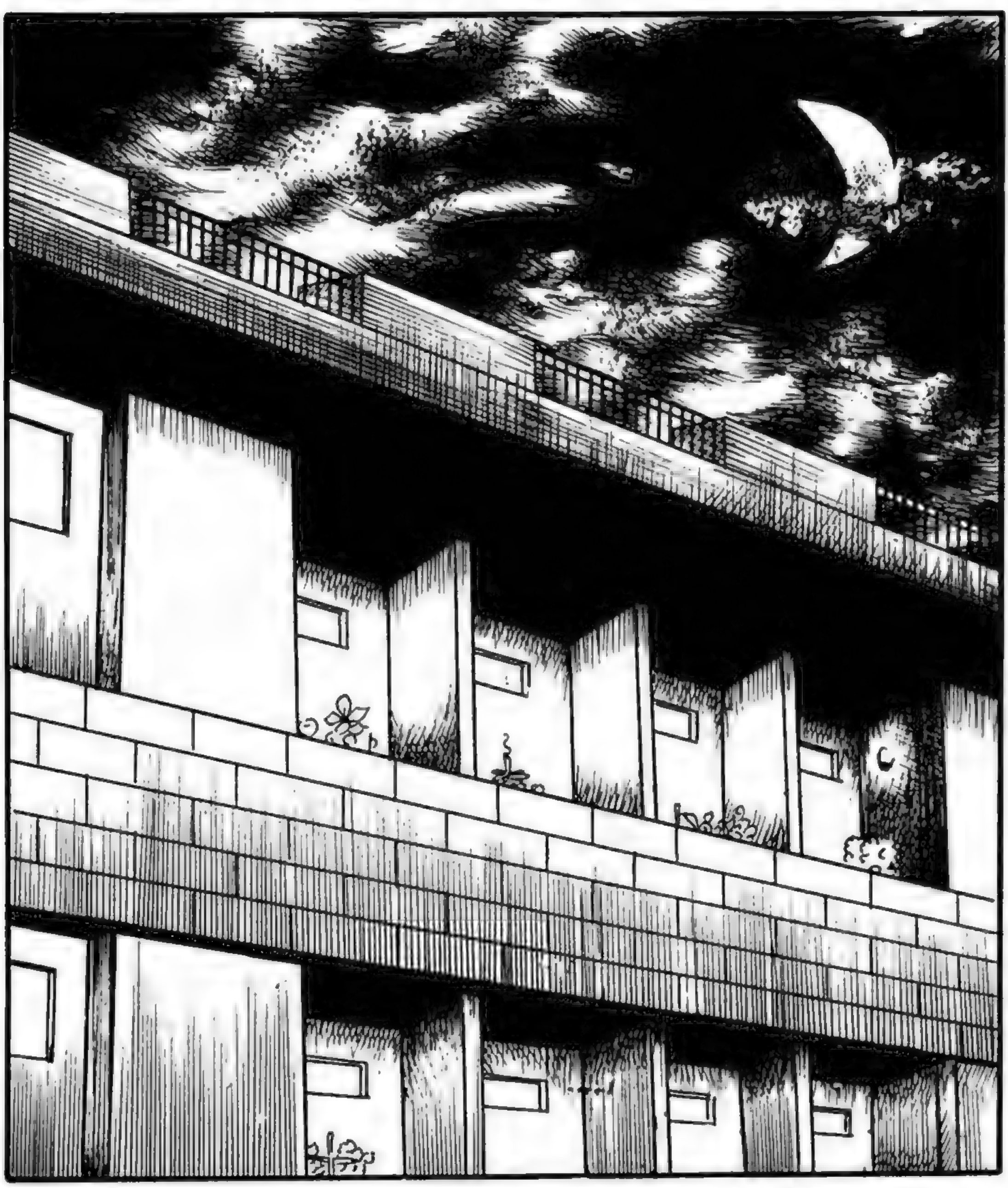
I'm Shoichi Kawakami, pleased to make your acquaintance!



3 The Haunting Lullaby of Dead Spirits



HANAWA ACADEMY GIRLS' DORMI-TORY

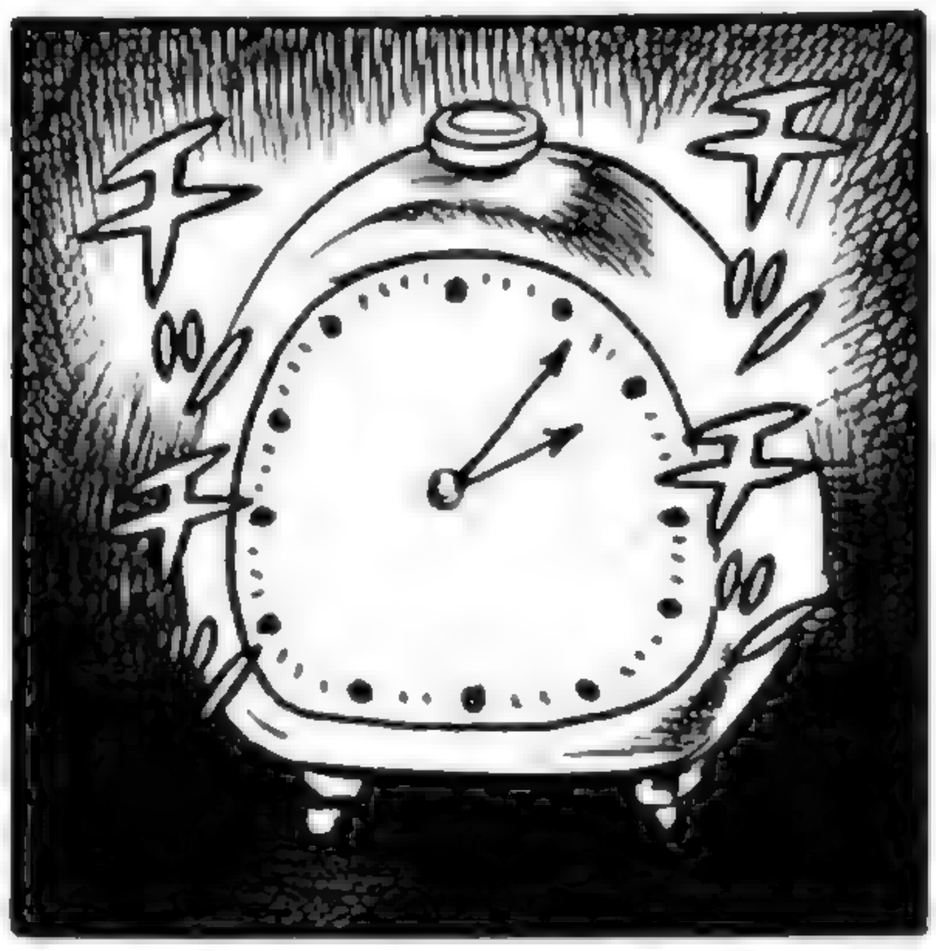
HANAWA ACADEMY GIRLS' DORMI-TORY

1-3

SHIRAI AKI

I feel like I met her years ago...
That new transfer student...

...
Ah..I just can't remember though...



I need to use the bathroom this late!!
Oh, what a hassle this is!

Toilet

Toilet
0;0

I gotta hurry and get back to my room...
Uh...the bathroom at night gives me the creeps!

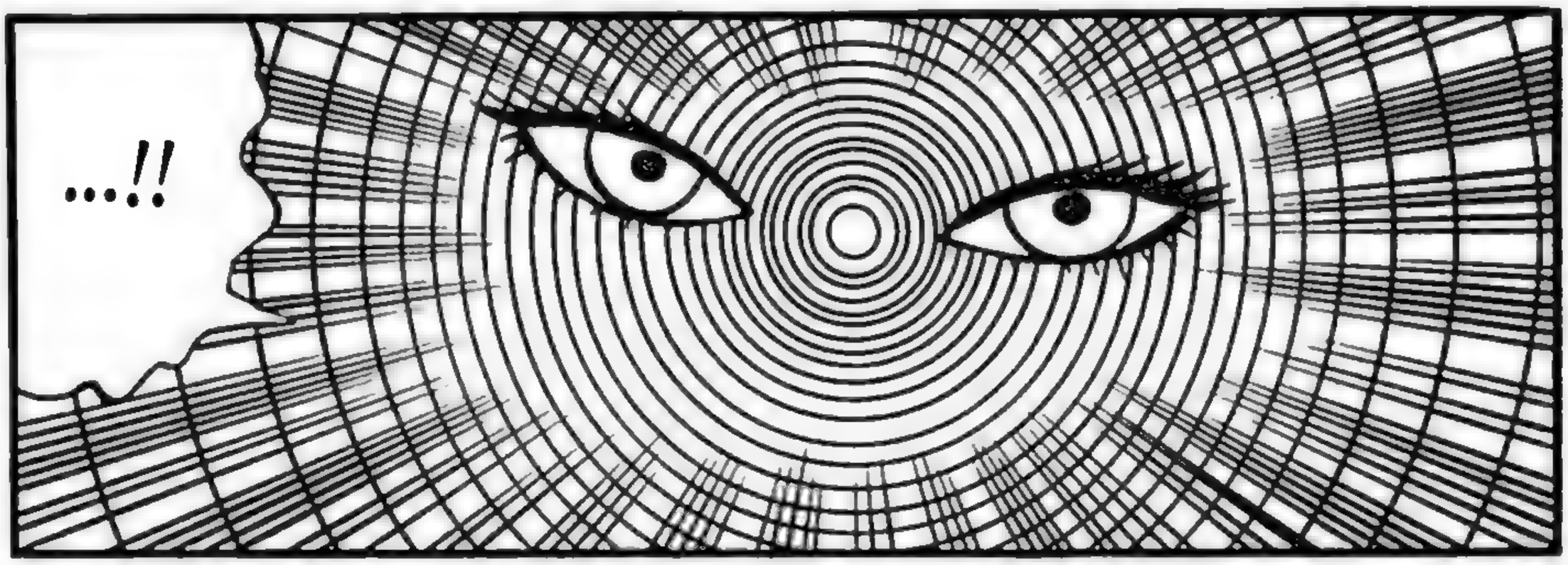
AH!!

W-who is it...?!

...

Oh!
It's
you
Yuri!!

...?!
Uh...
Um...?!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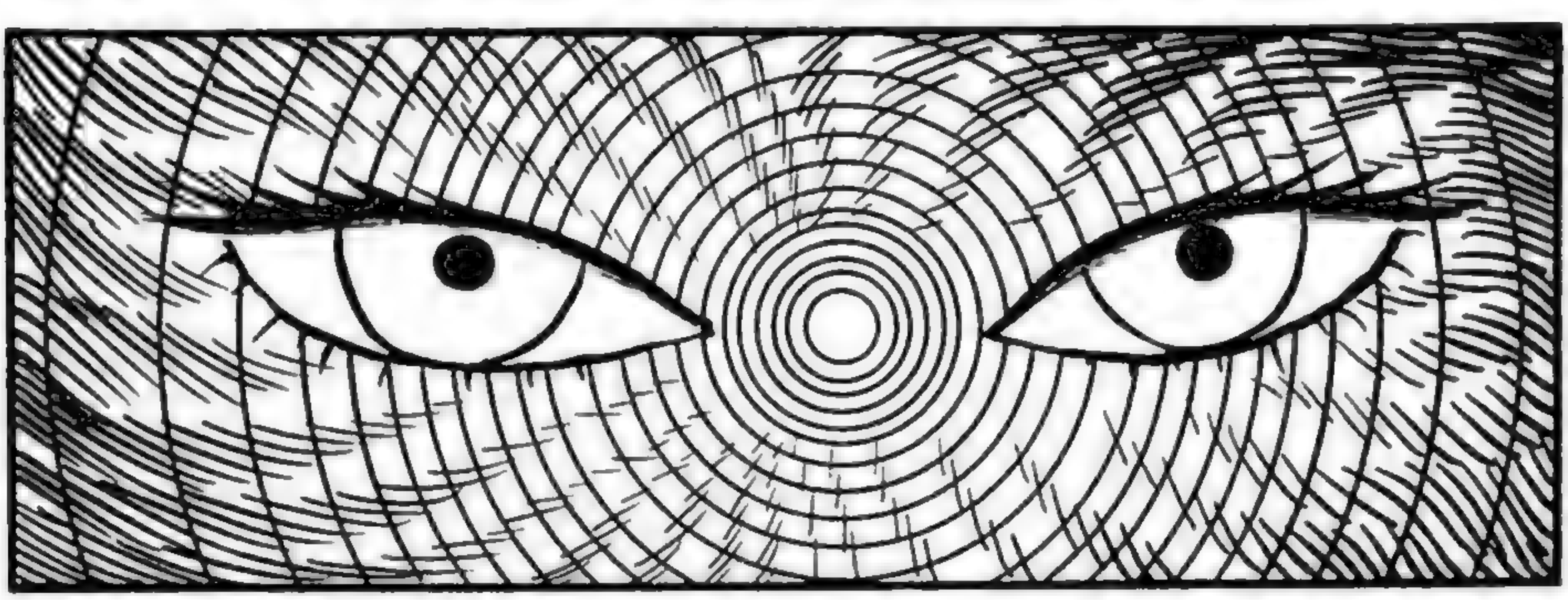

AH!!
Ugh!!
AHHH...!!

!!

AH!!

Wha... Where am I?!

It's the Black Swamp!!

This is...

AH!!

Oh, it's you Yuri!!

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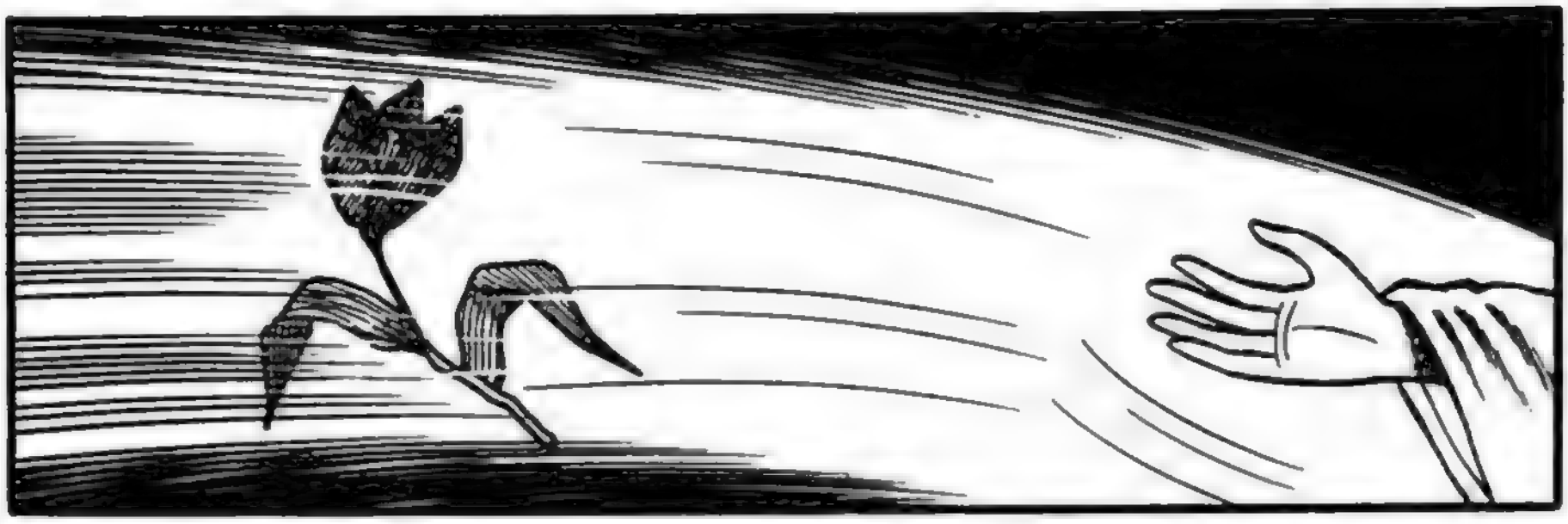
That's the Black Lily...!!

Grant us our most cherished wish...

Oh, sacred Black Lily...

Oh, Black Swamp! Our Mother! Bestow your strength upon us...



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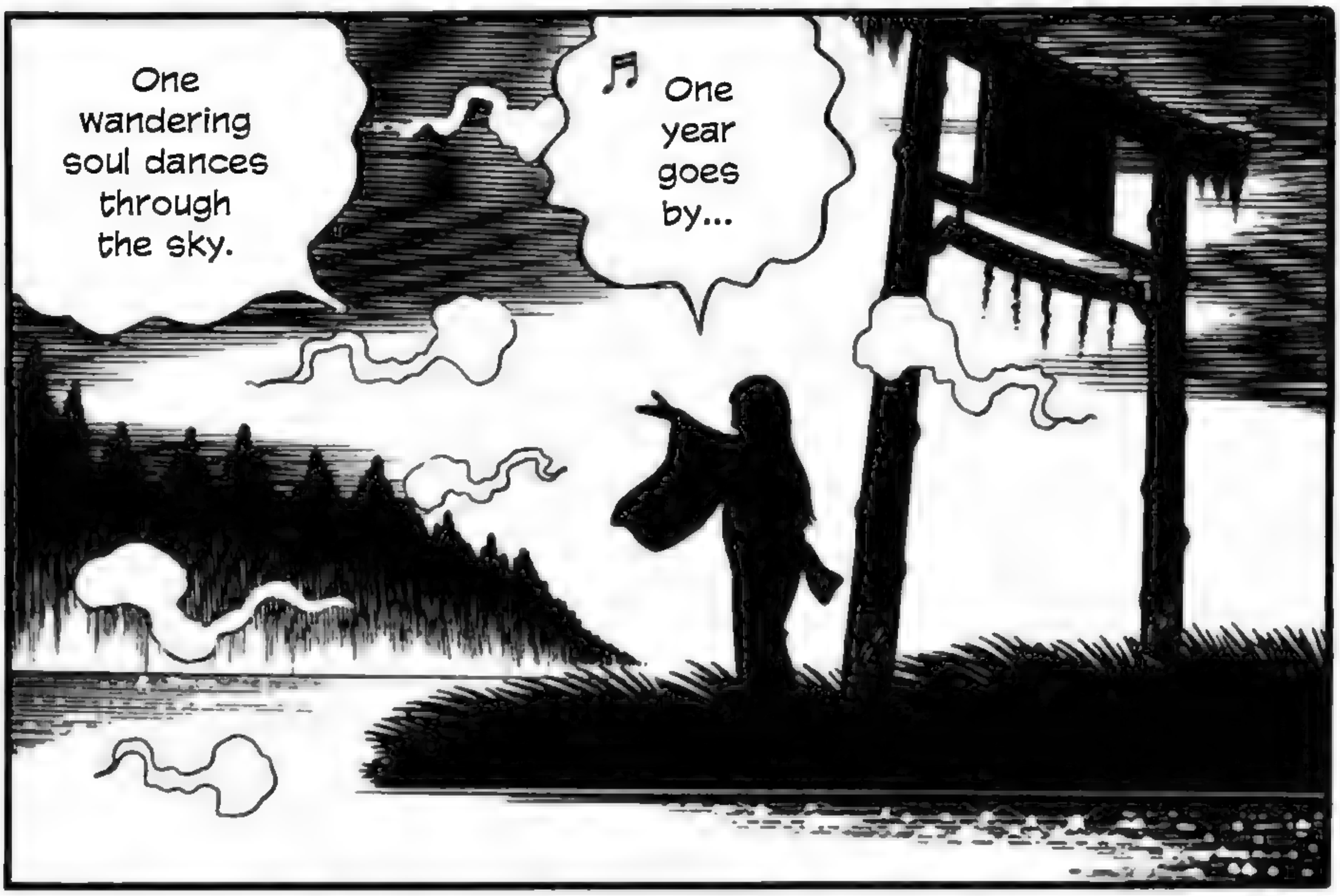
One wandering soul dances through the sky.
One year goes by...

The blossoms bloom as the flesh rots away...
Two moons pass on by...

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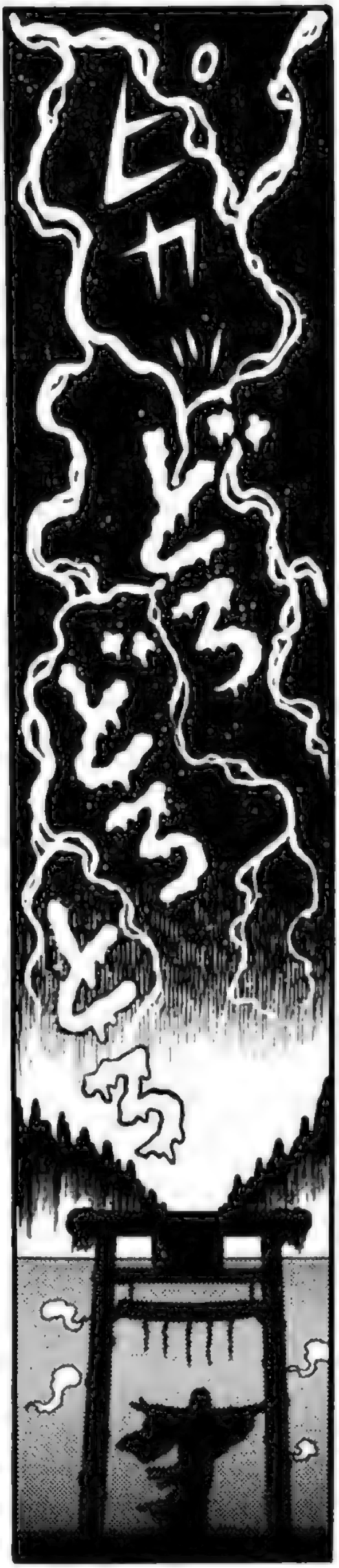

ぬらりひょん

♫ Three years go on by...

Four years are gone...

...!!

Three spirits rise, reborn in the night!

The four corners of the world bathed in crimson light...

To avenge the grudges of times long past...

Five years gone...

To settle the score from days before!

Six years gone...

tremble
tremble!

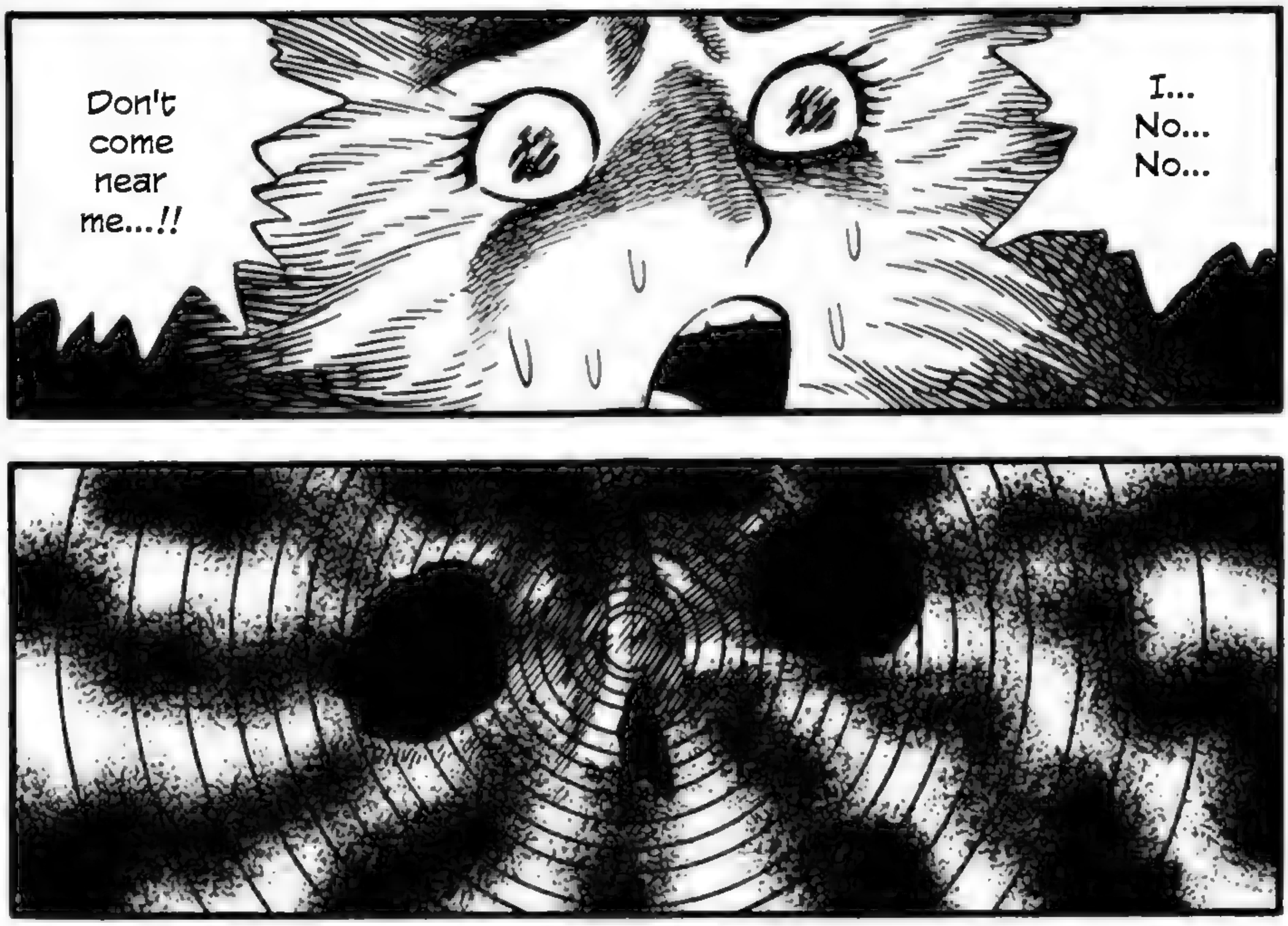
Seven times
the
memories
of dreams
that linger
on...
Seven
seasons
pass...

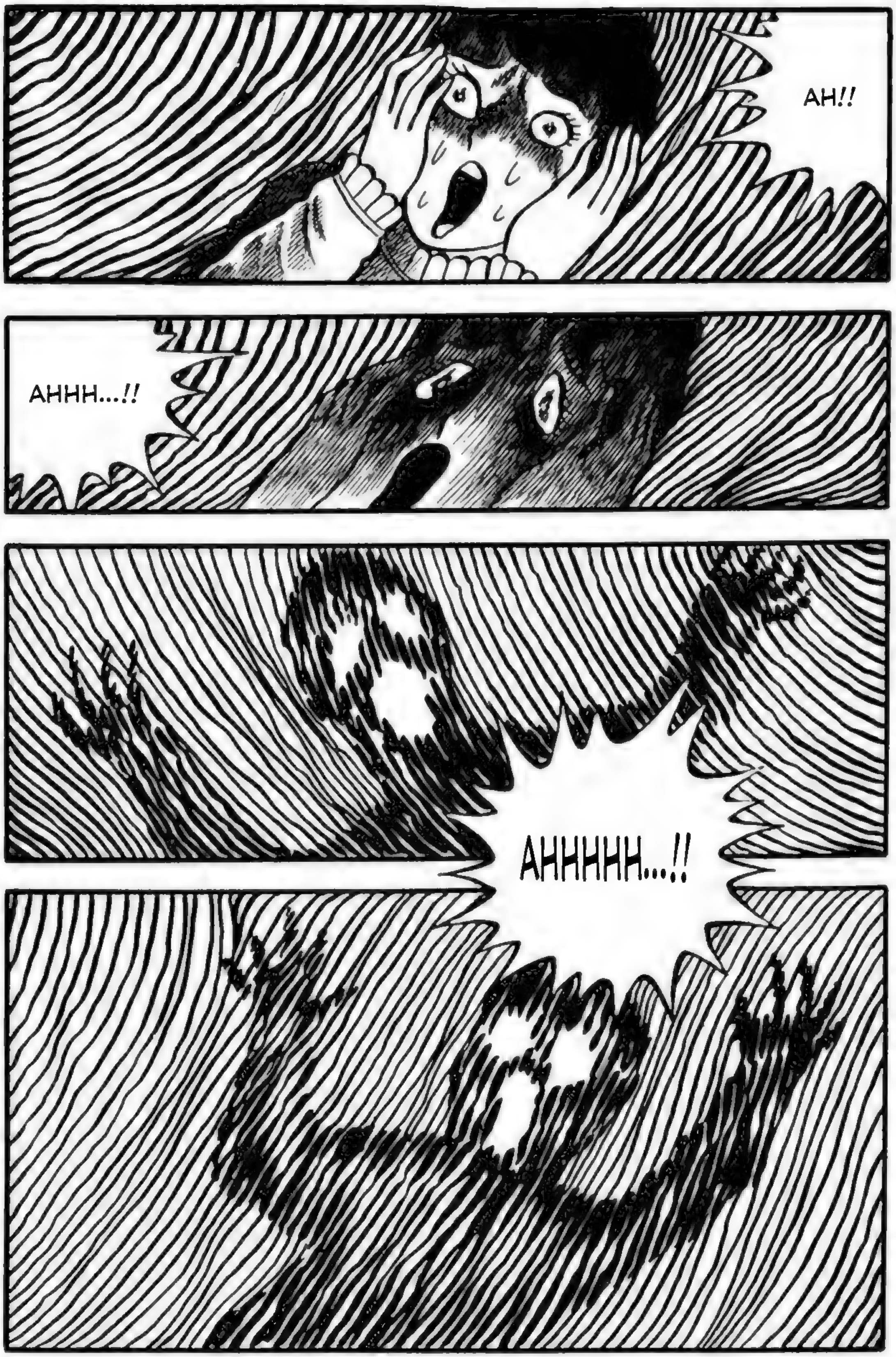
To
eventually
return to
the realm
of reality...
Seven
times
the moon
waxes
and
wanes...

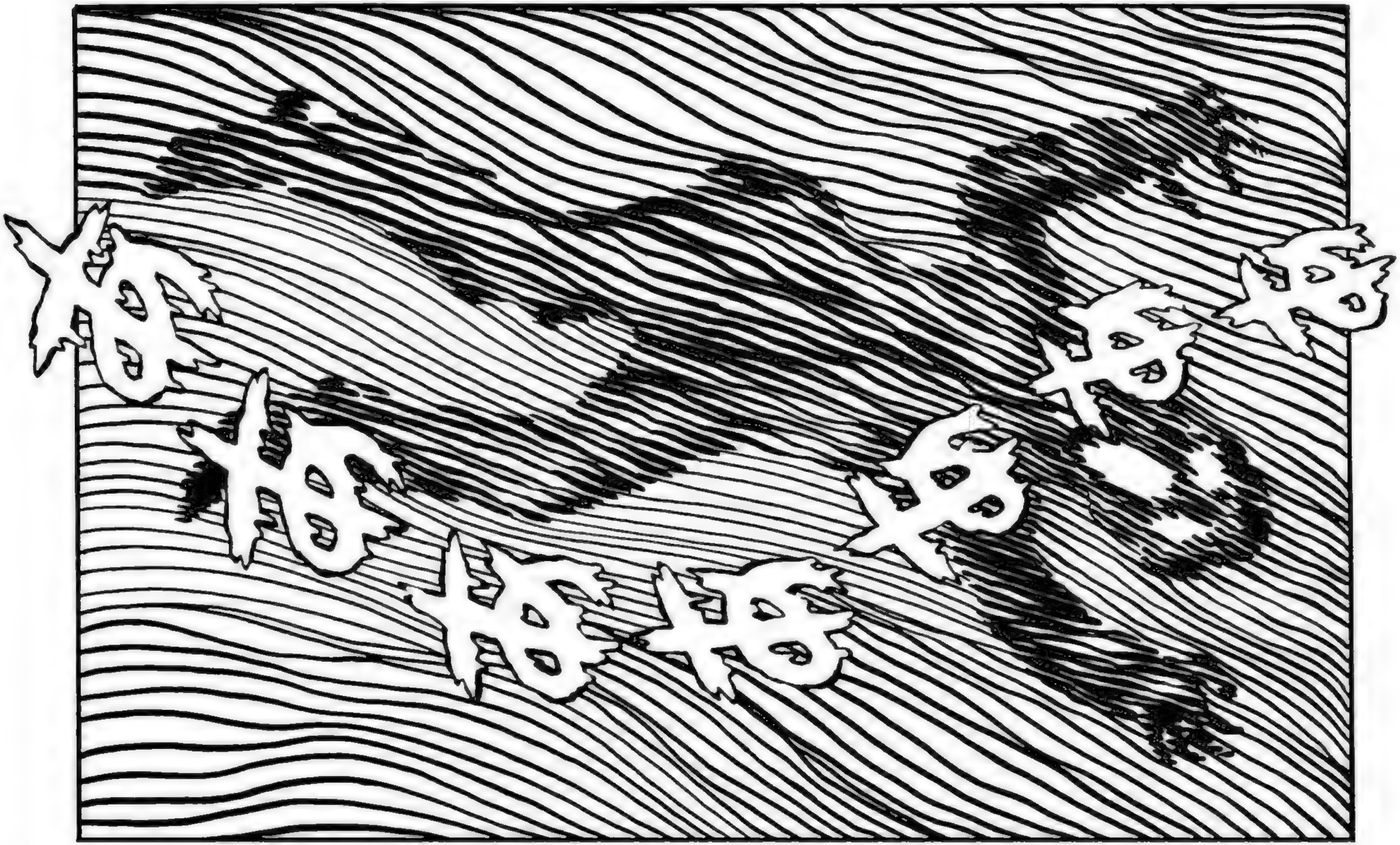
The ages pass on by...

And the Black Lily blooms anew...

Oh God!!


Don't come near me...!!
I... No... No...


AH!!
AHHH...!!
AHHHHH...!!



Pant
pant

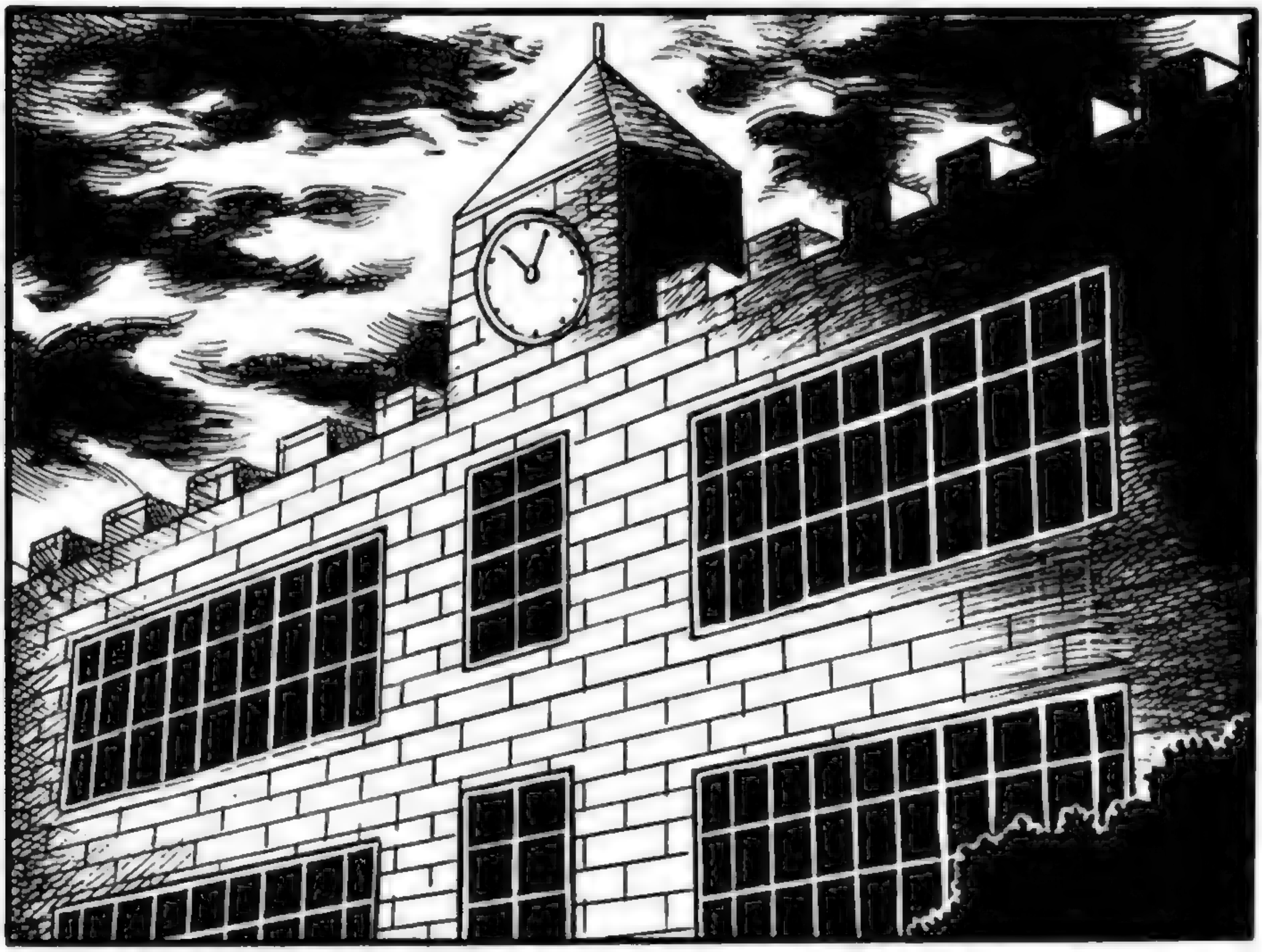
Just a
dream...

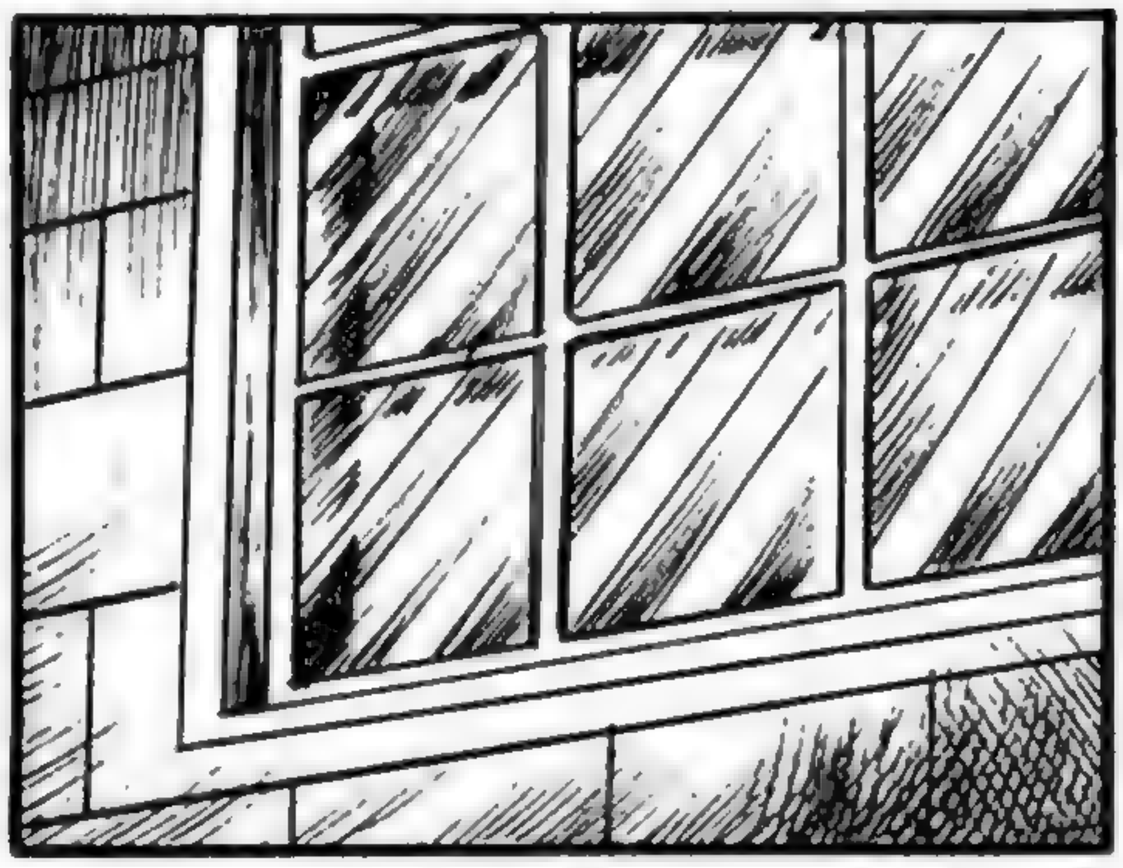
OH...!!

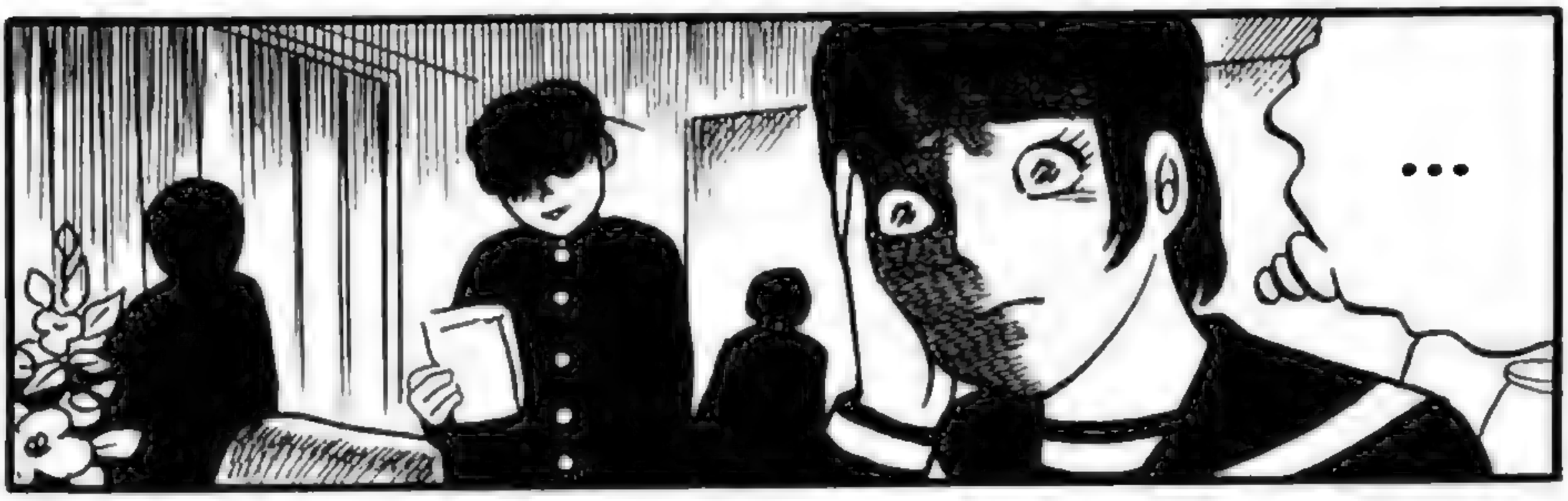
I have a
feeling
something
terrifying is
about to happen
at school...all
because of
Yuri Kuronuma...

Hee
Hee
Hee...

4 Spirit Photographs






...

Here,
I did
the
re-shoot!

How about it? Perfect, right?!

By the way did you see that stunning new transfer student yesterday?

Well... Yeah...

You boys just lose your mind over even a slightly cute girl!!

What?! Already spreading rumors, huh?

I had maybe five shots left on my roll from the the re-shoot...

Well, this is kinda strange...

Check them out!

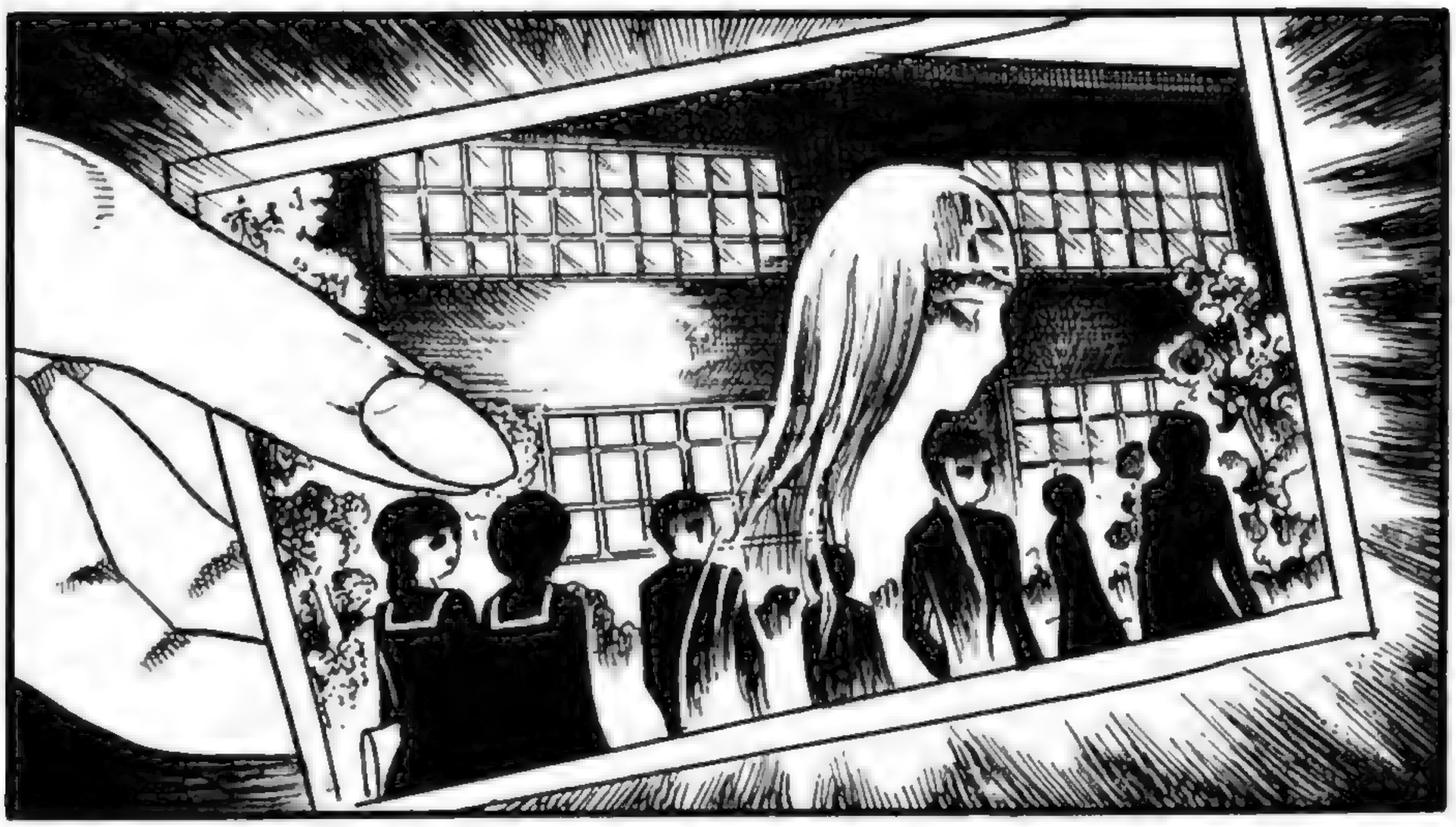
I know it's wrong, but I secretly snapped some photos of her...

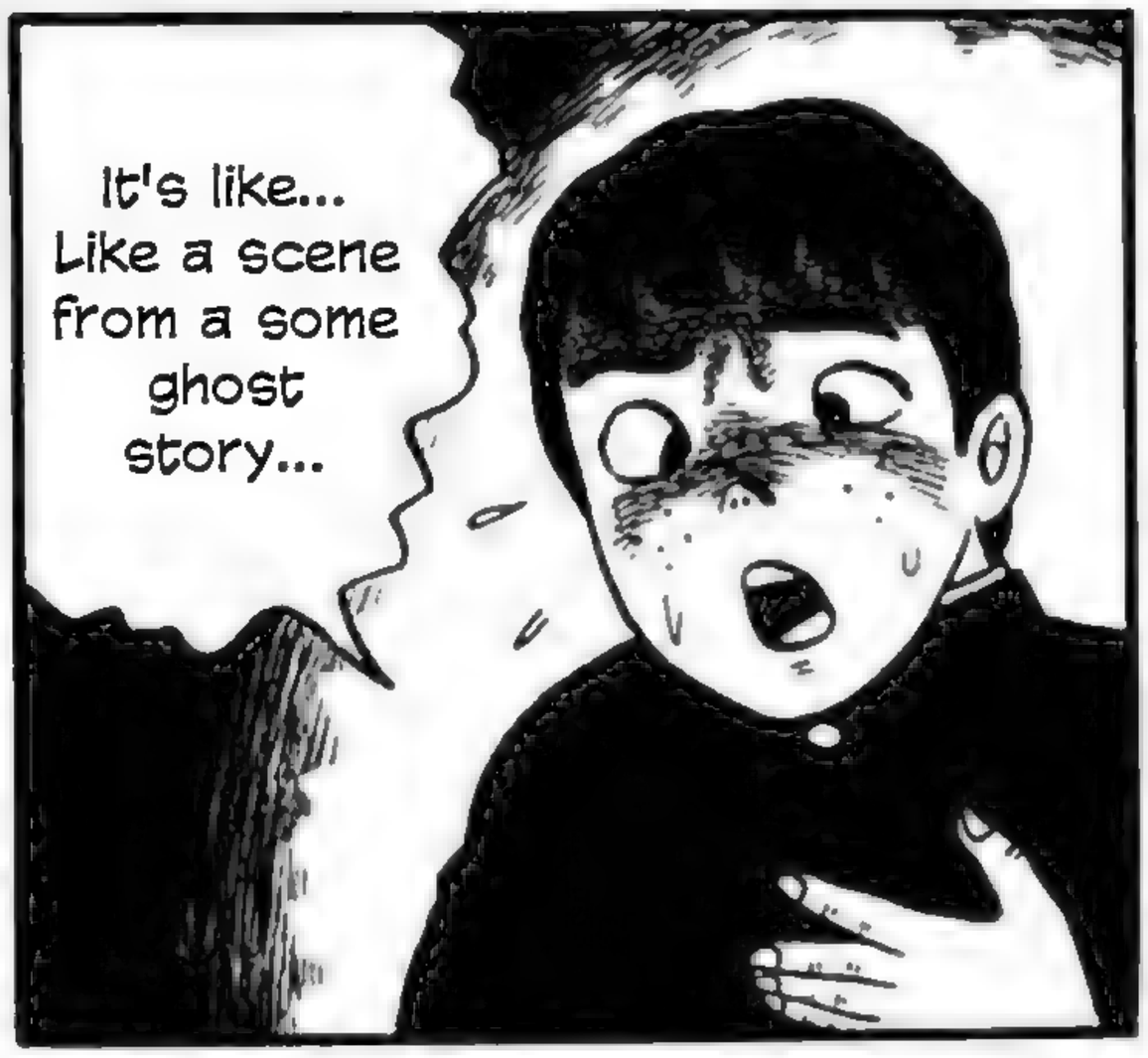
And then, guess what....

This is... Whoa...

What the...?

Year 1 Class 3




It's like... Like a scene from a some ghost story...

What?! What's with the urgency...?
Hoshino, come with me for a sec!!

!?
Who knows...
What's up with those two?

Are you kidding me, right now...!?
Wait! What...?!

...
I'm serious! It's no joke!!

No way!! It was no dream I had!!
I was trying to convince myself it was just a dream... But now...

There must be some terrifying secret she's keeping!!

Something is going on! She has to be hiding something!!

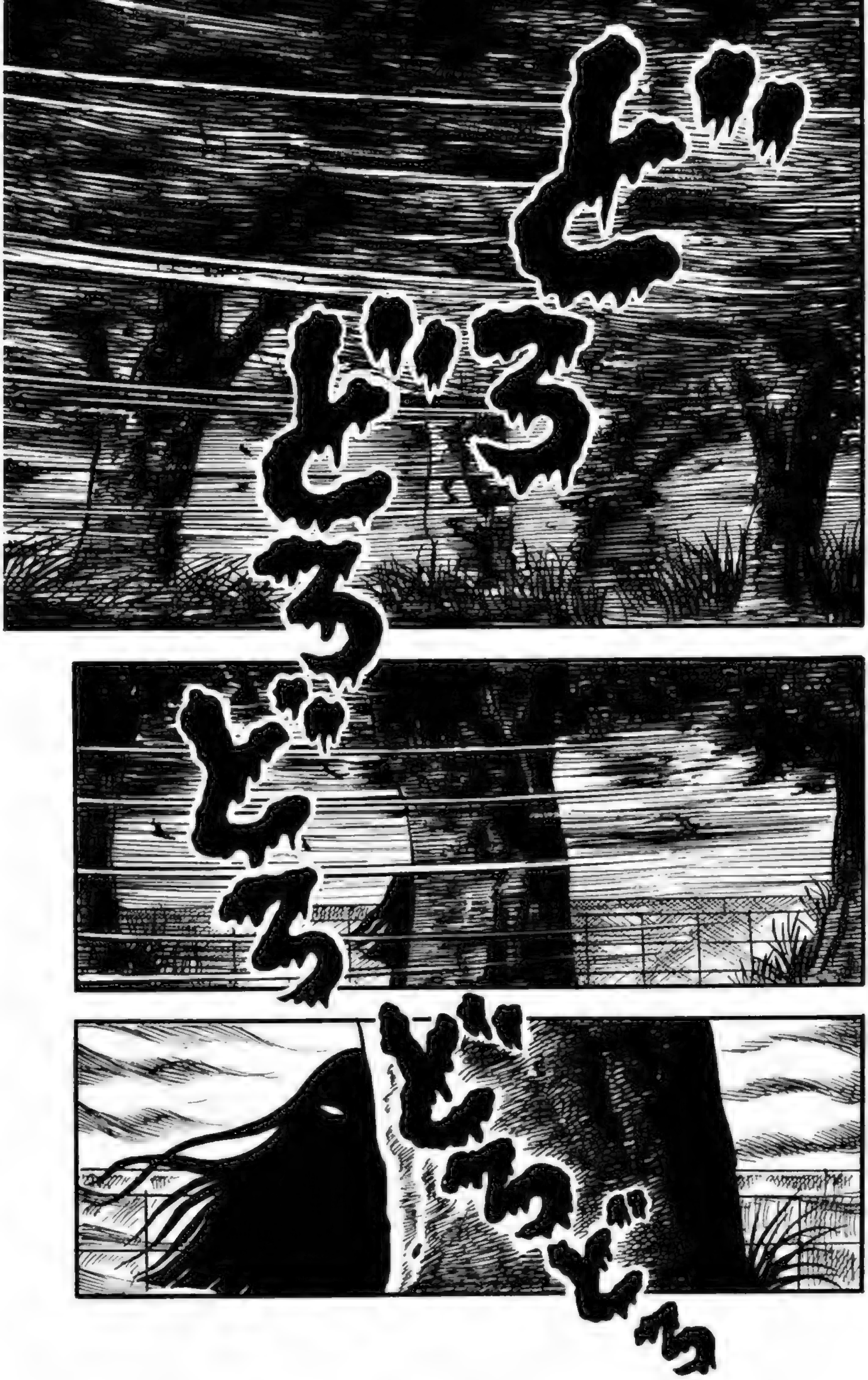
You're right! This is anything but ordinary!

Uh...all five photos look like that...

I can't shake this feeling of dread!!

I'm scared! She is... Well, just strange...

EEK!!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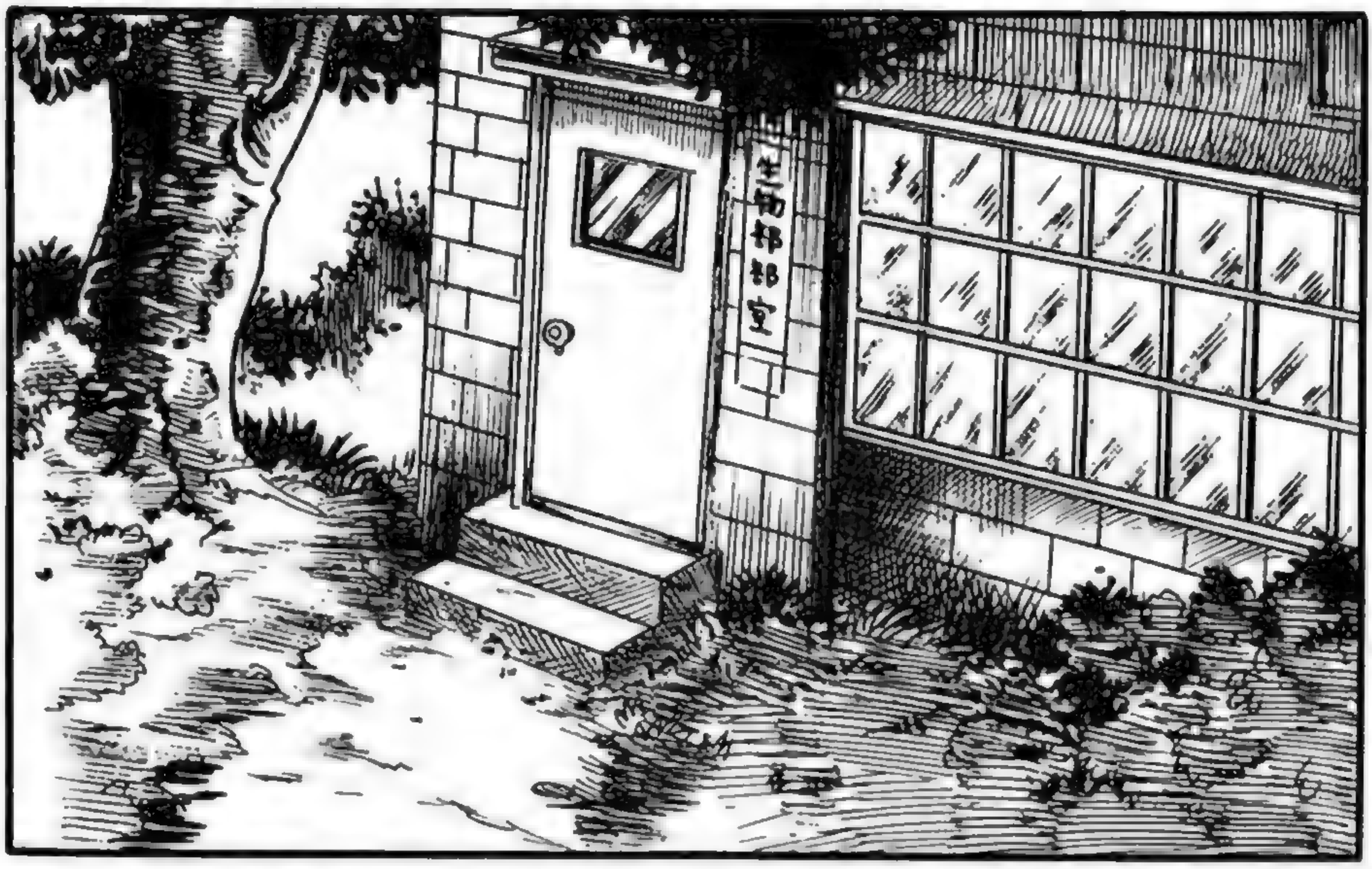
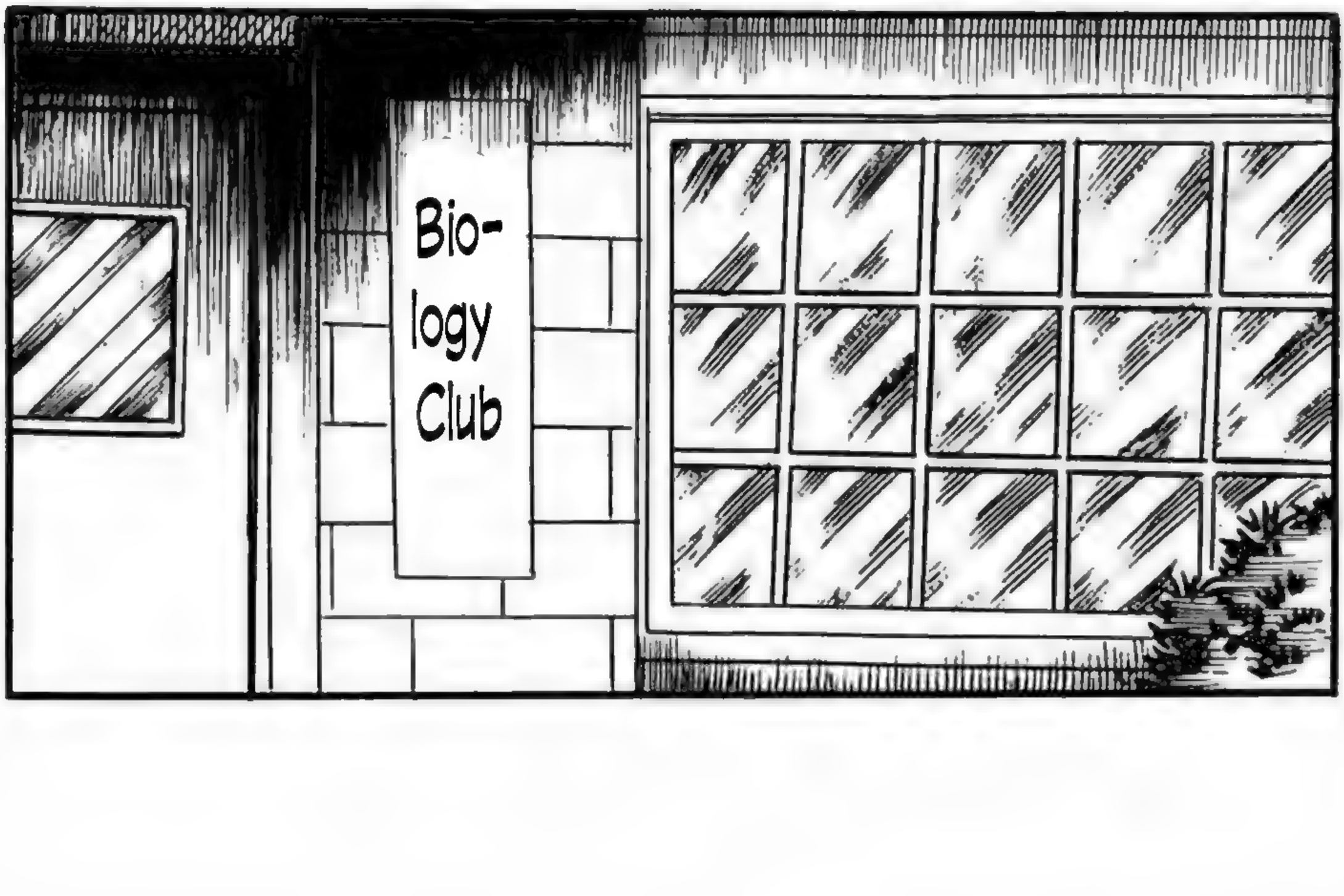
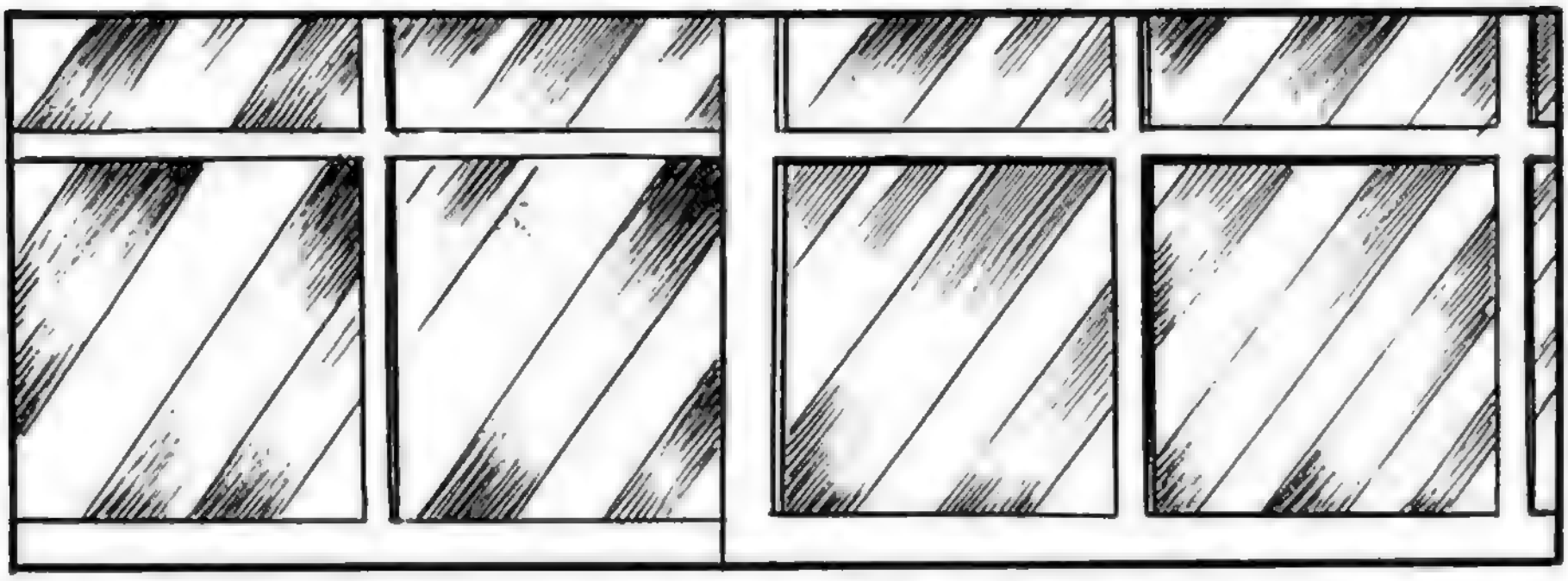
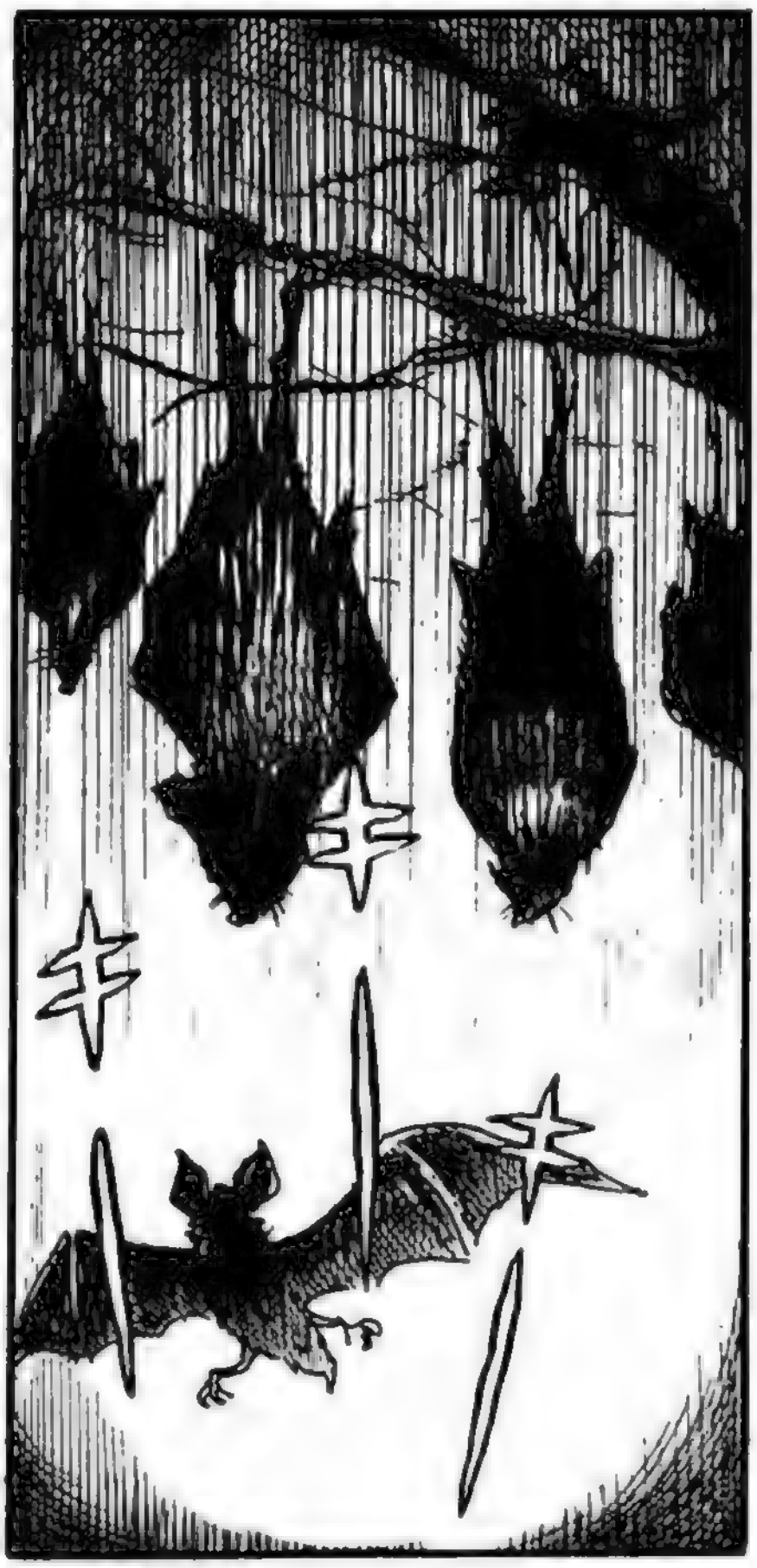
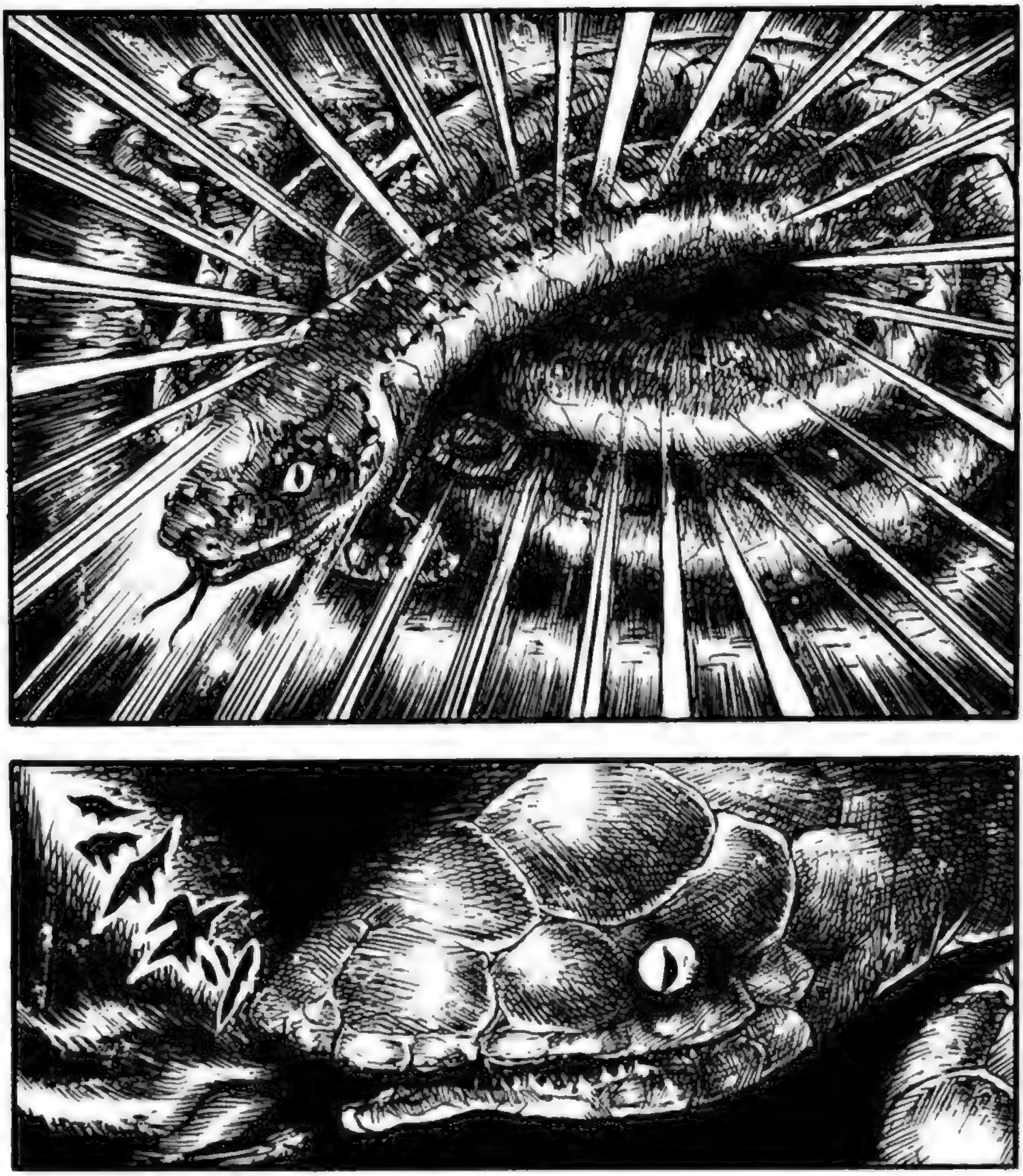
5 The Strange Incident in the Biology Club











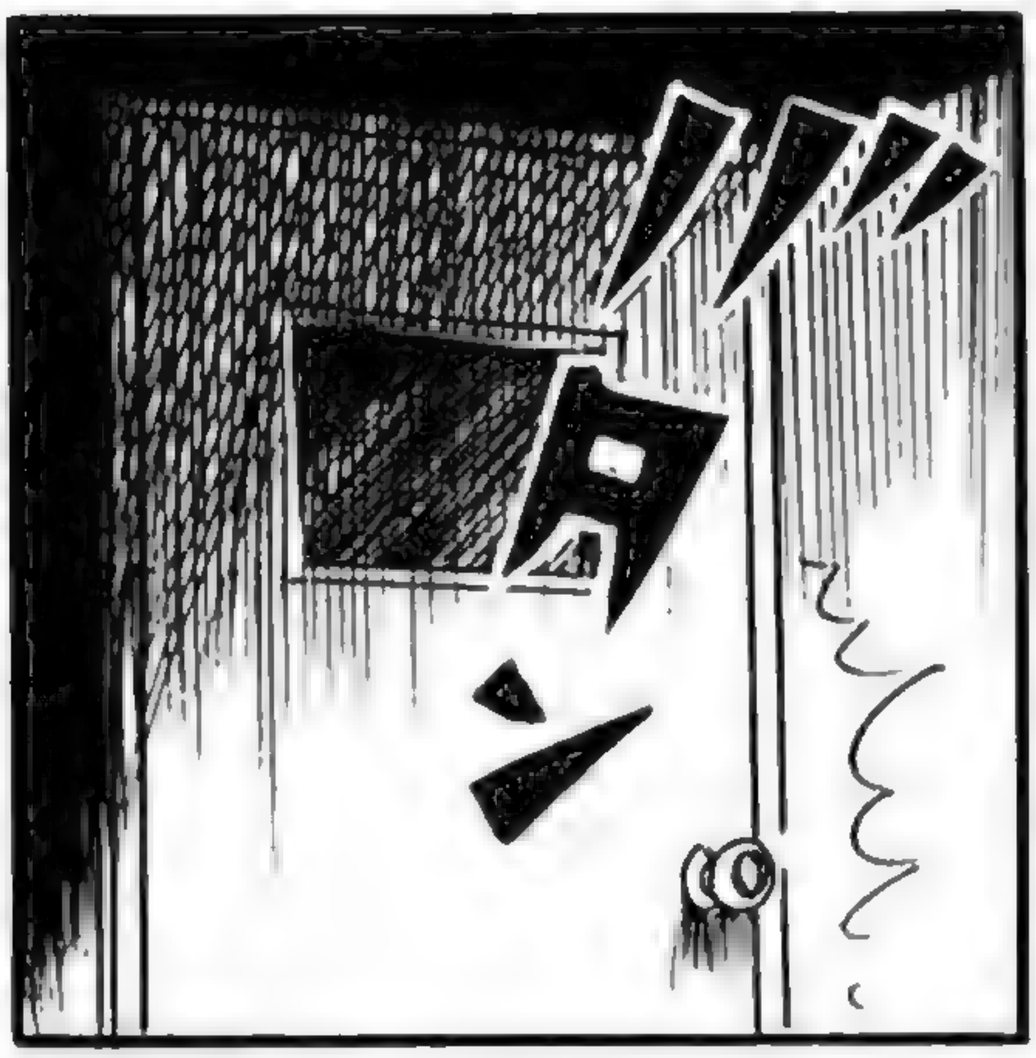
So...is everything going smoothly?

Everything is coming together perfectly!

Yes...just as you instructed.

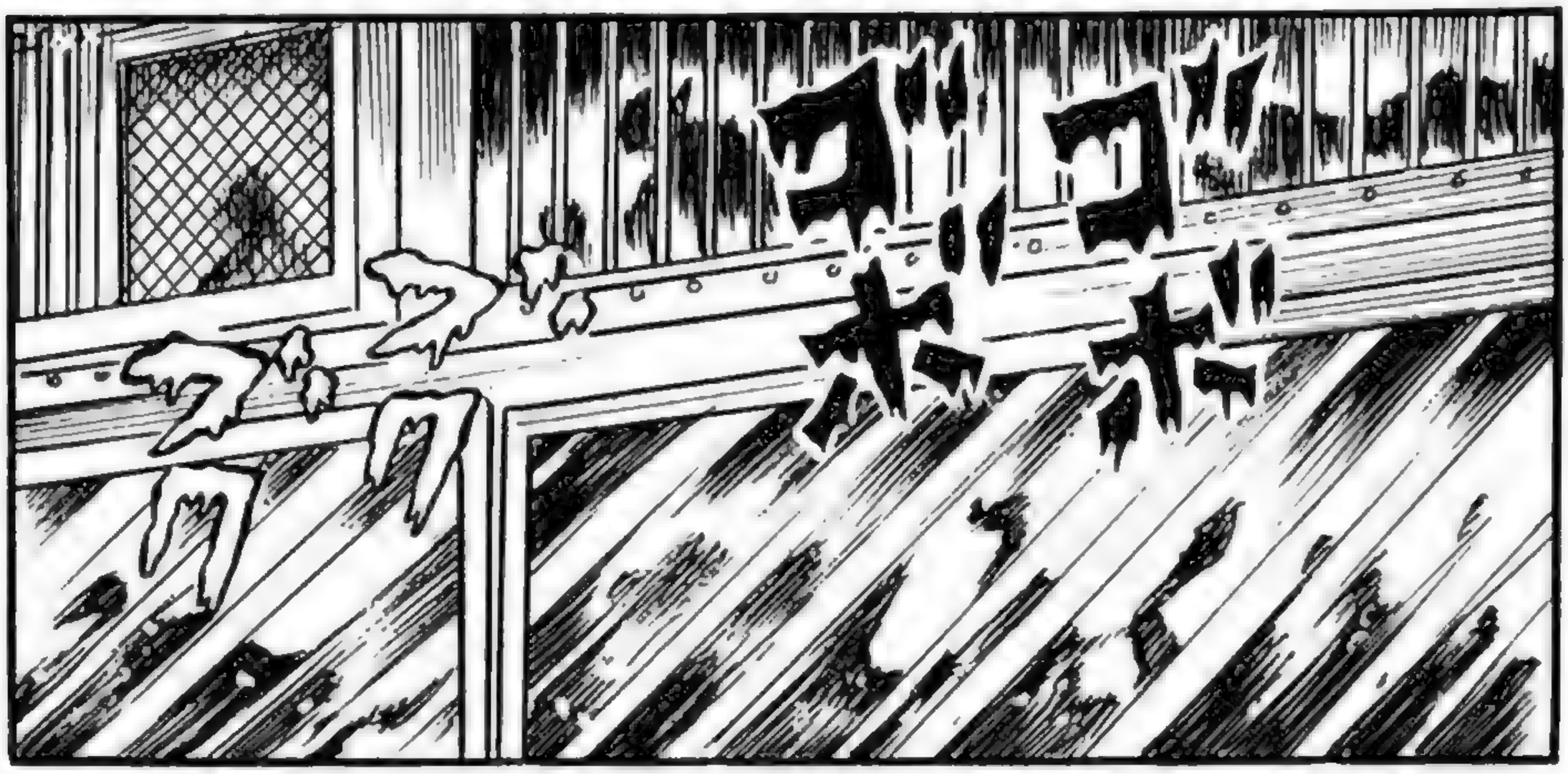
Well, until time comes...

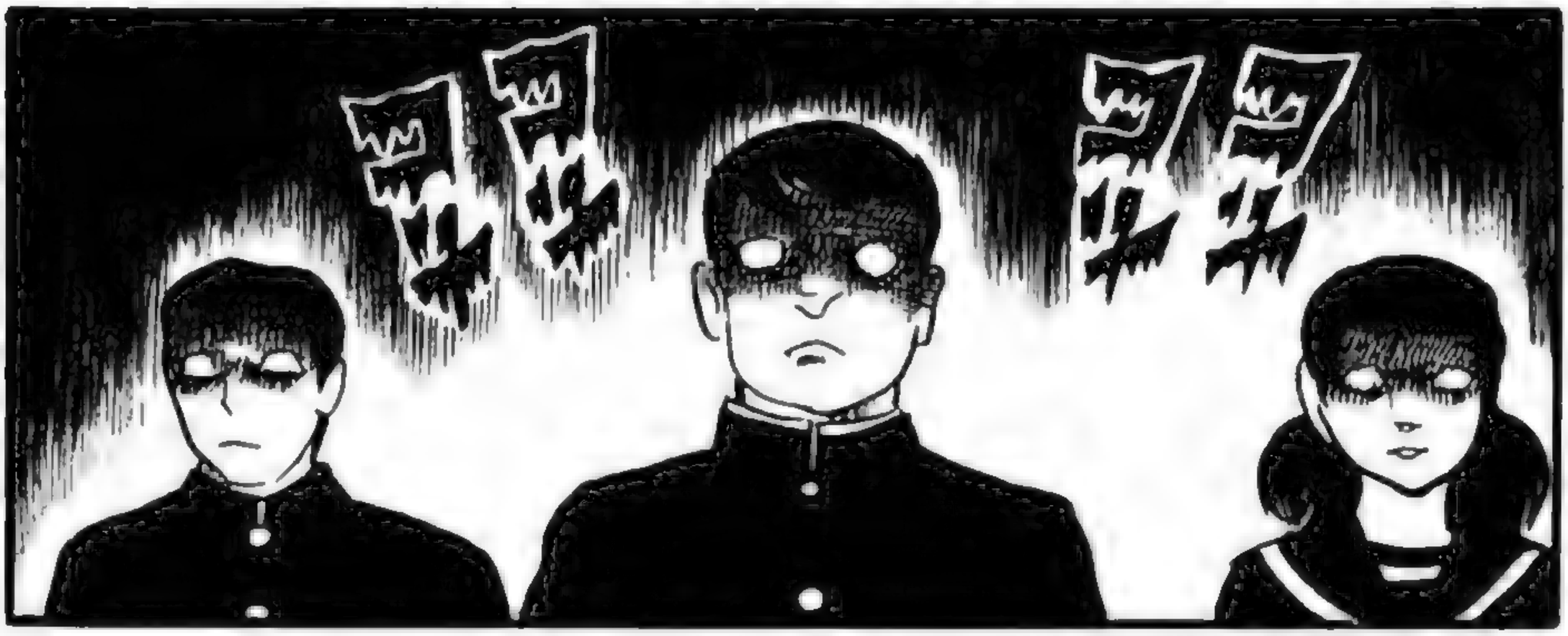
Take good care of them.

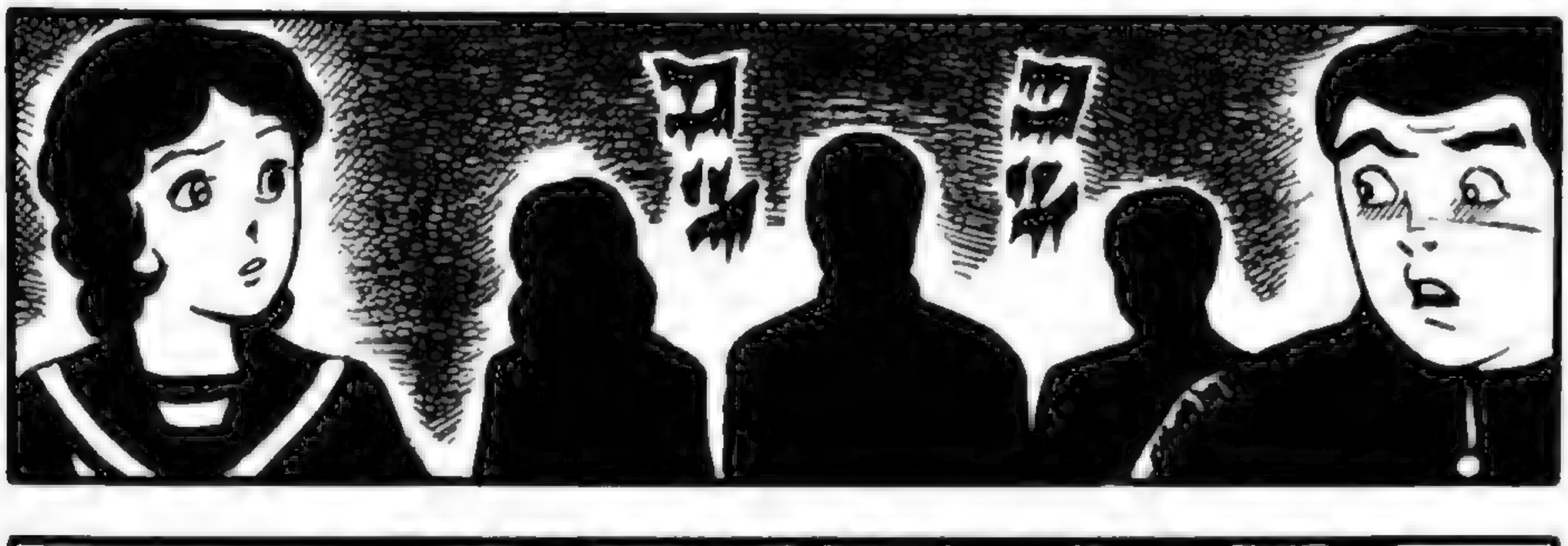


OK
then...
We
understand.

...
...







It's those guys from the biology club...!!
Oh...

She sure is gathering all the creeps around her...
That bunch has been acting real weird lately.
Seriously? Is that true?!
Yeah, ever since Yuri joined the Biology Club...
...!!
She sure is beautiful, but man, she's got bad taste in company!

But, there's nothing we can do about it, seeing that nothing has happened at all...

Yeah, I know all about the Biology Club...

I know, something is going to happen very soon!!

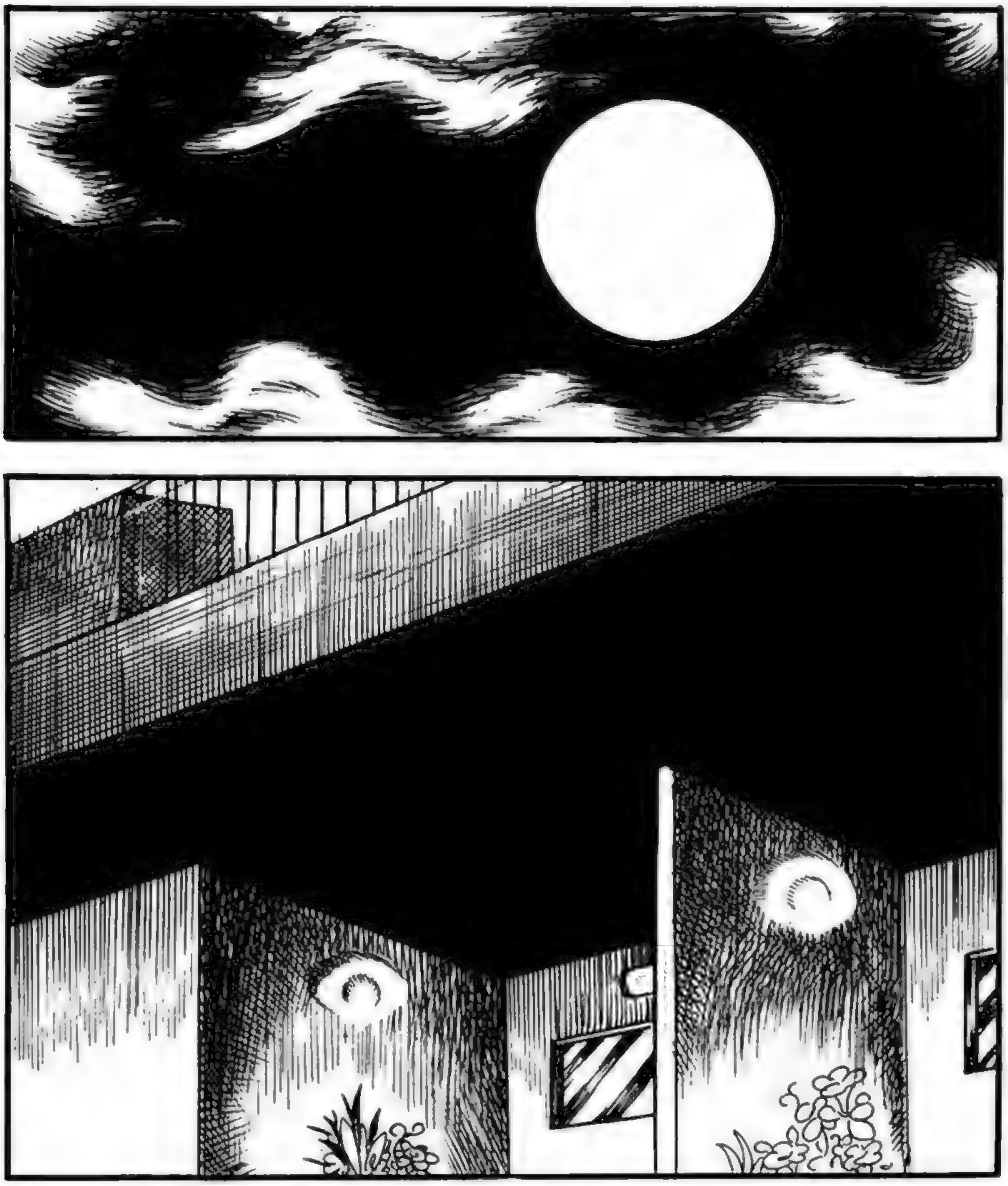
This isn't the time to be so easy going!!

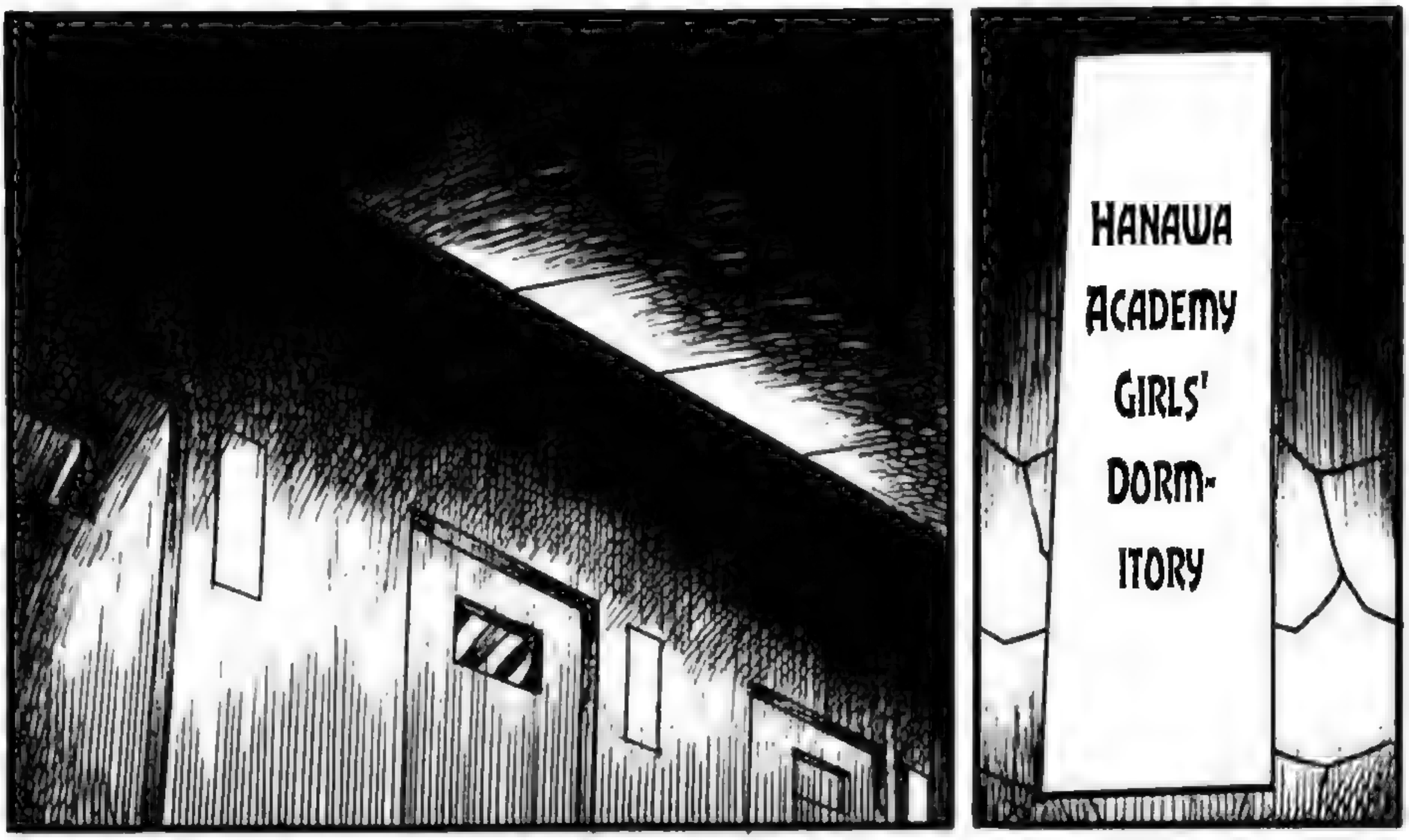
Let's just wait and see how things go for a bit...

Well, what the heck are we supposed to do?

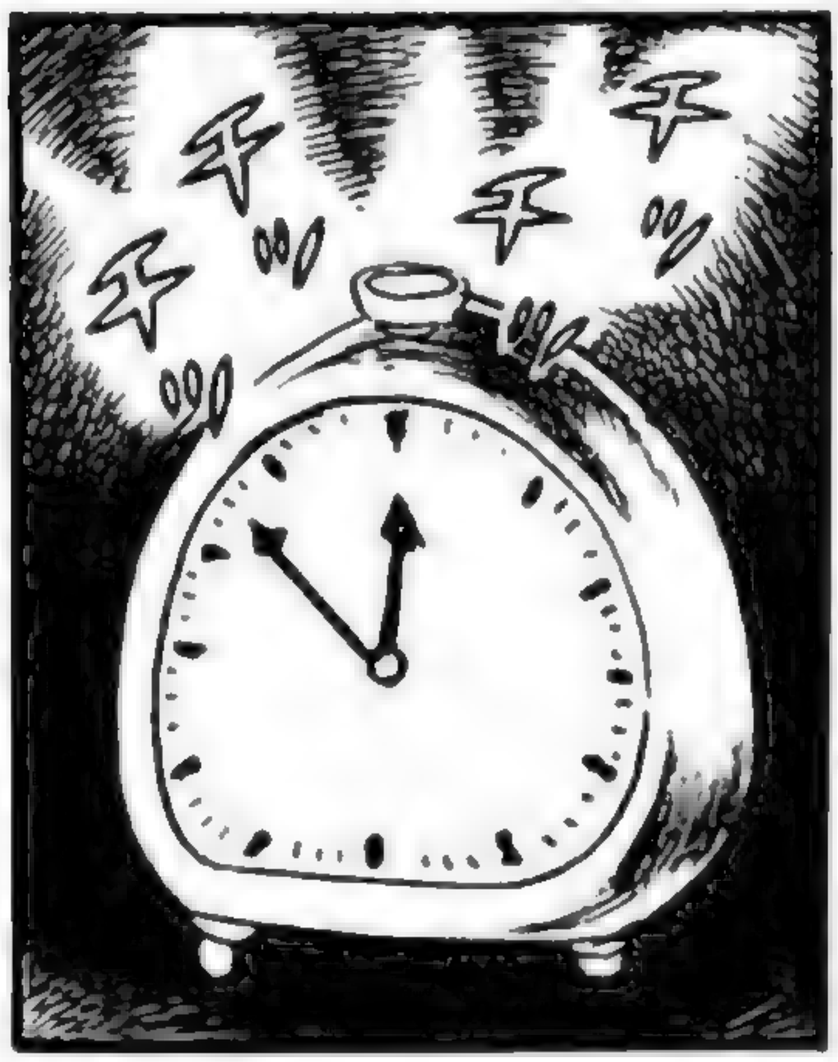
W- well... Um...

6 Midnight Offering




HANAWA
ACADEMY
GIRLS'
DORM-
ITORY

1-3
Shirai
Aki



I left it in the classroom!
Oh great! My math workbook!!
social studies
Workbook
1-3

If I don't do my math homework, I'll have to run five laps around the school!!

Oh no! Is it already this late? What should I do?

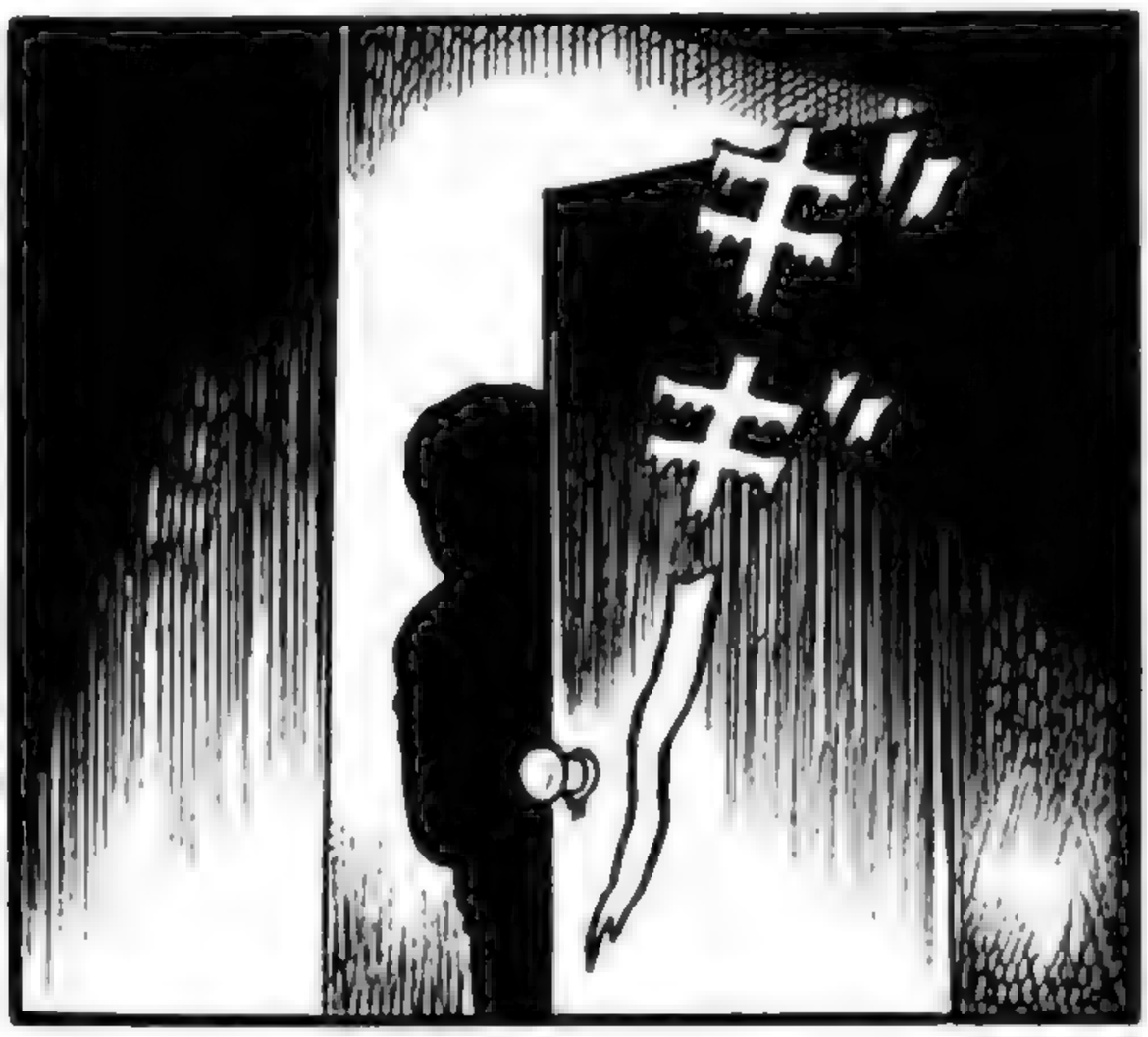
HANAWA ACADEMY GIRLS' DORMITORY

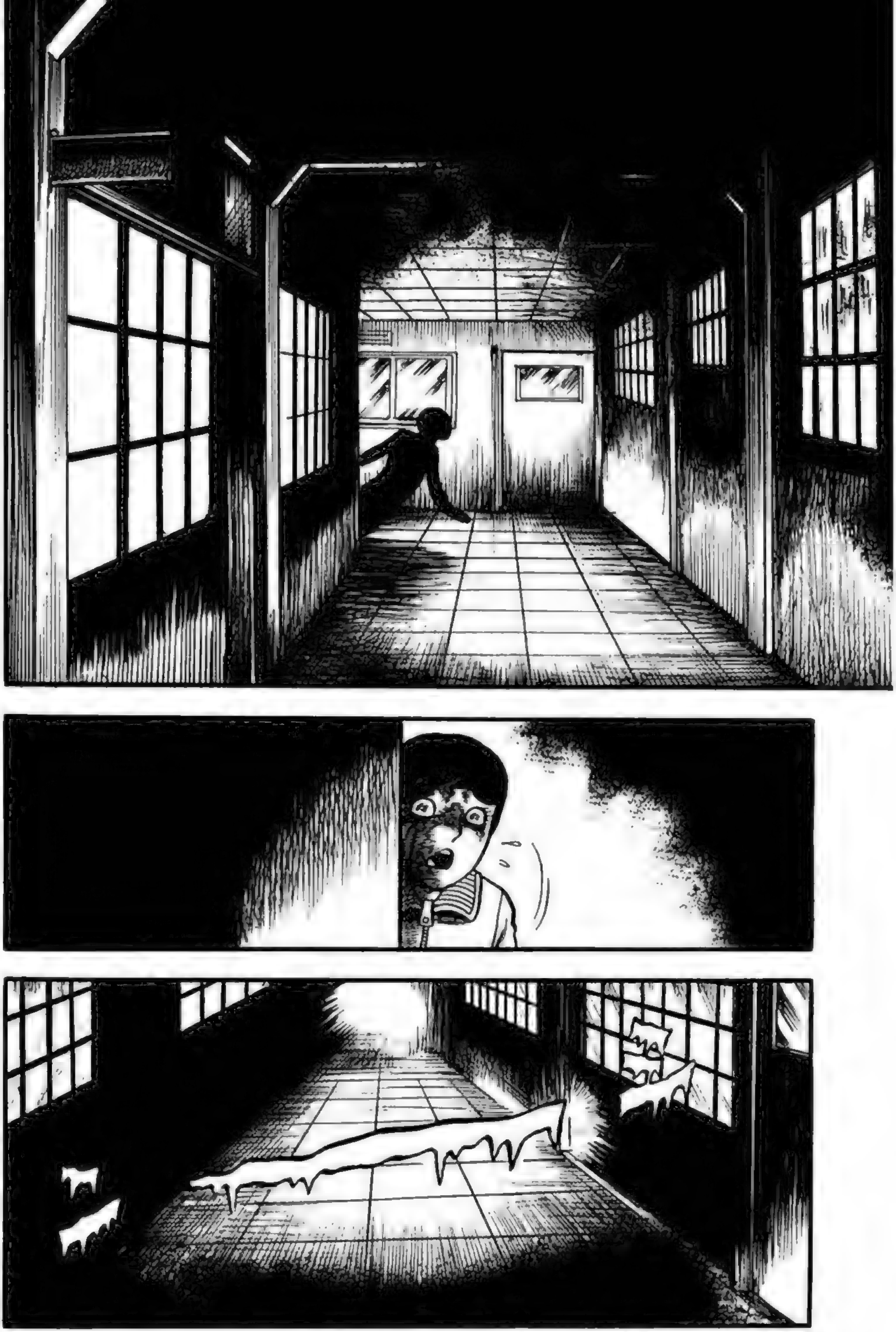
I have no choice but to go and get it!

Nothing I can do!

ololbbb

The school's so eerie at night...!! It creeps me right out!!





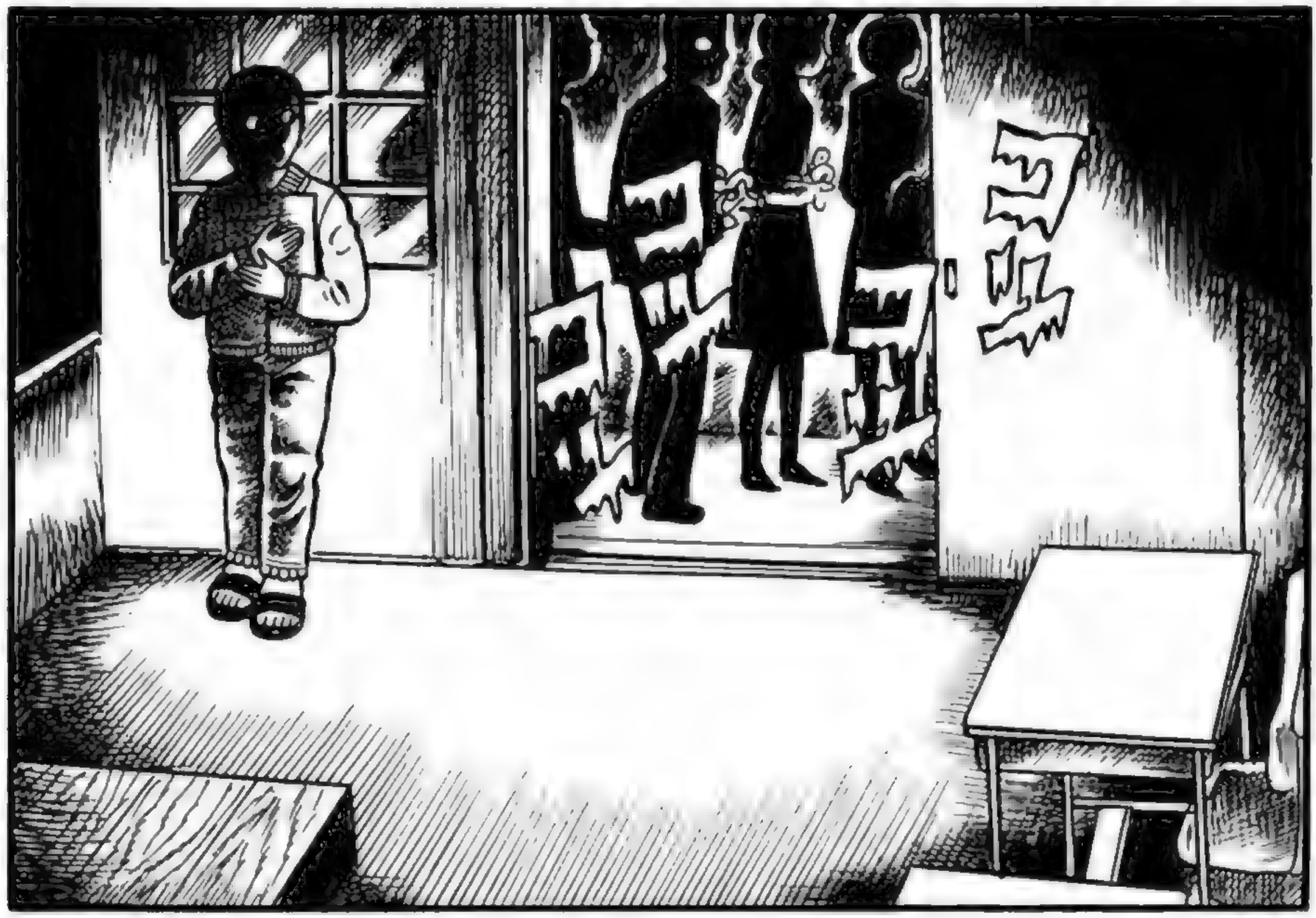
Mathematics
Homework Book

Shirai A.

Found it!!
Time to hurry
back to my
room!!

!!

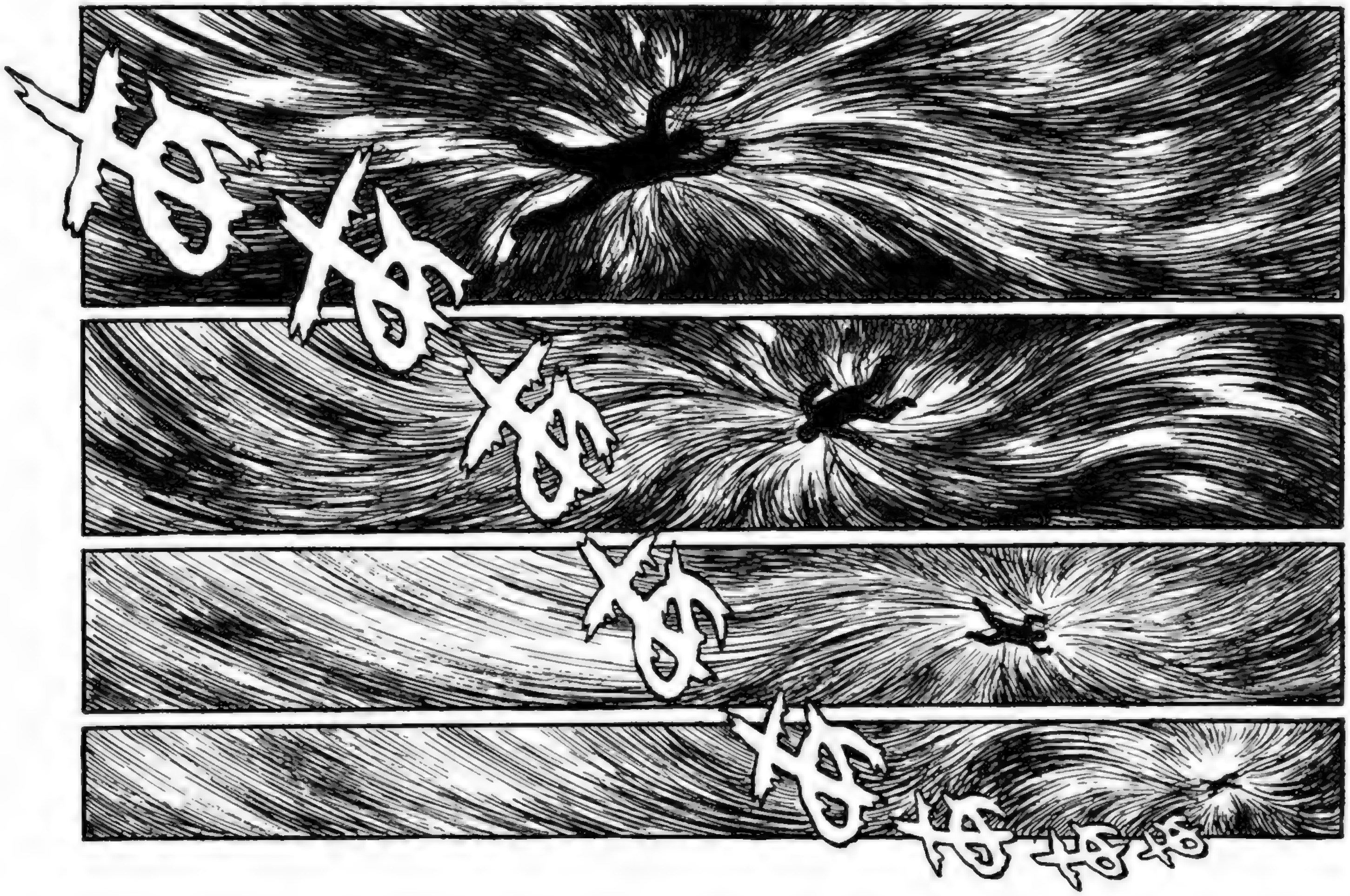
It's...those guys from the Biology Club!!



Oh...!!

What could they be up to this late at night...?!

AHH!!
Would you like to know?
Oh... It's you, Yuri!!
Hee Hee Hee...
AHHH...!!
Ah!!



HAA!!

AH!!

ゴゴゴ

We can begin!!

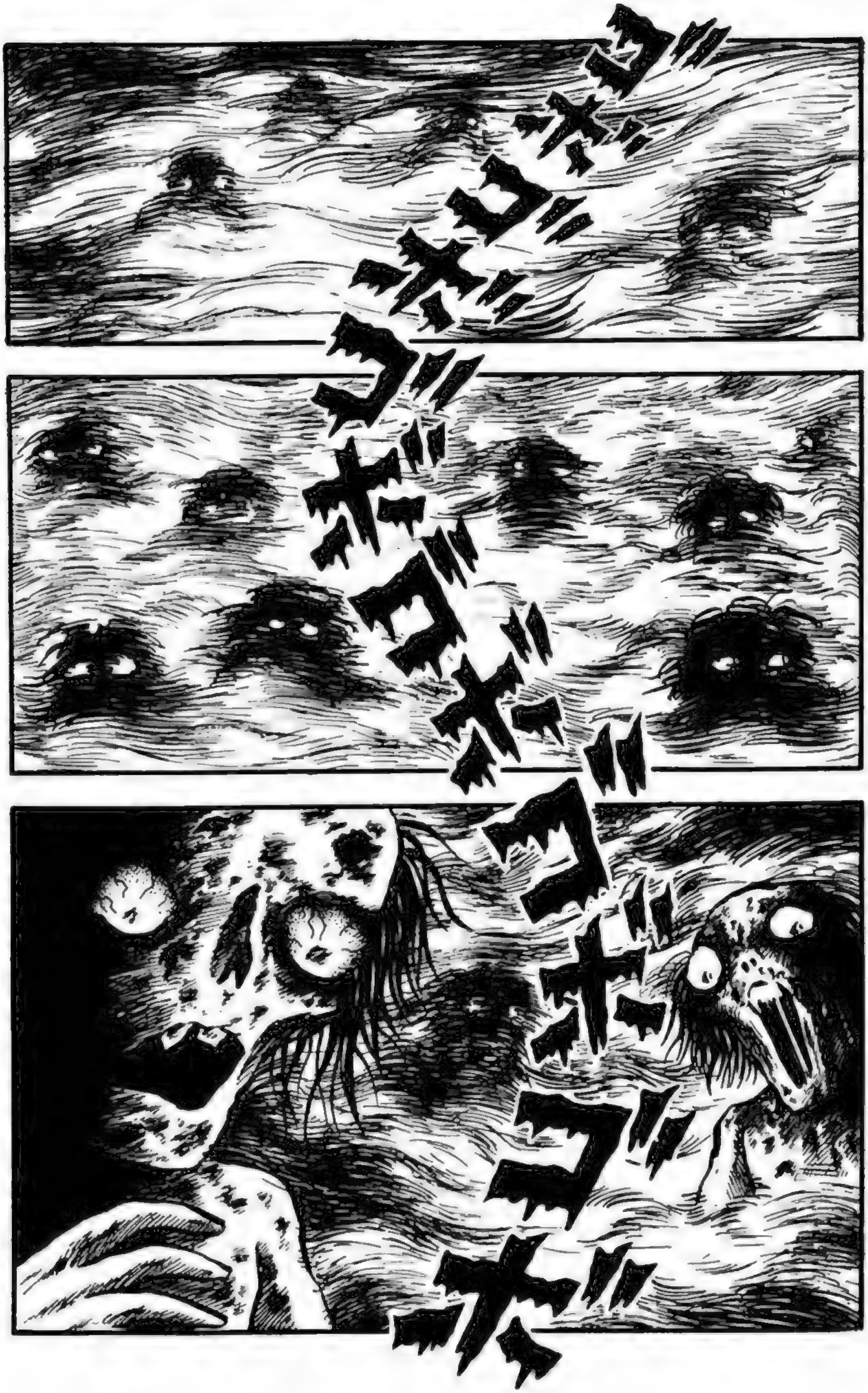
Now that this Torii gate has been destroyed!!

SCREECH!!

CHIIII!!

Grant the spirits of our clan your strength!!

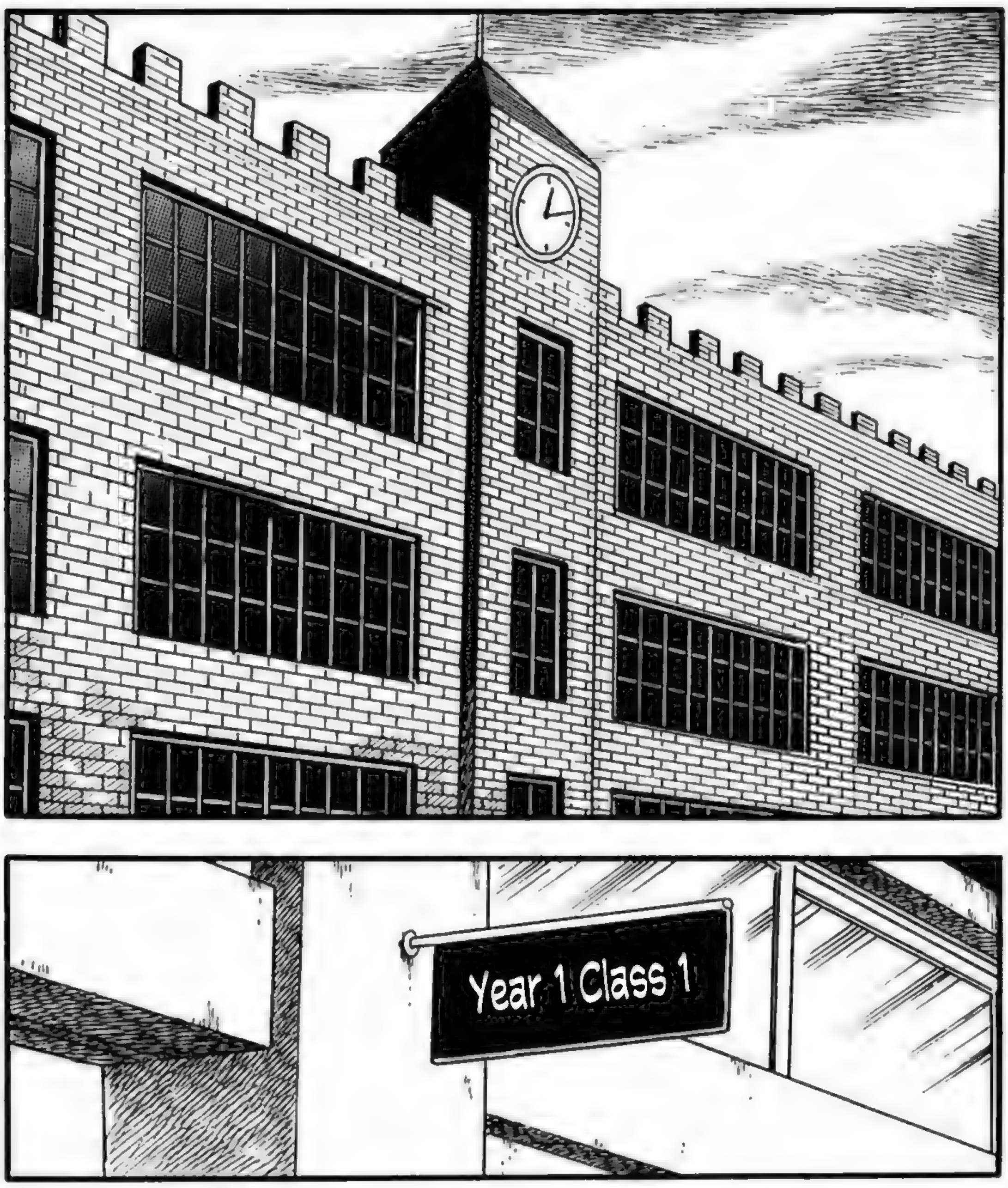
Oh Black Swamp, our Mother! We offer you these sacrifices!



Shirai Aki!! I'm here to claim your life!!

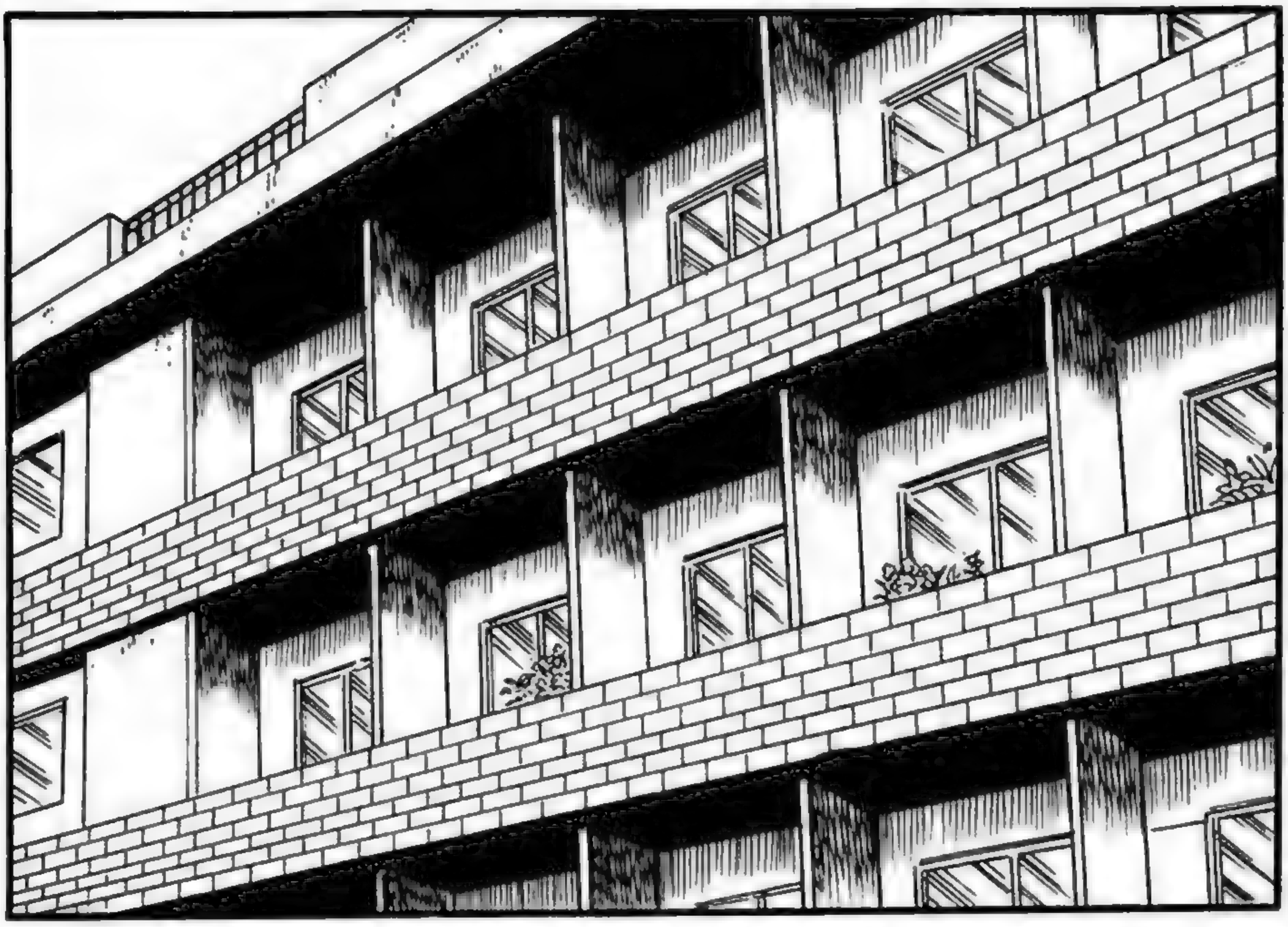
No! Stay away! Don't come any closer!!

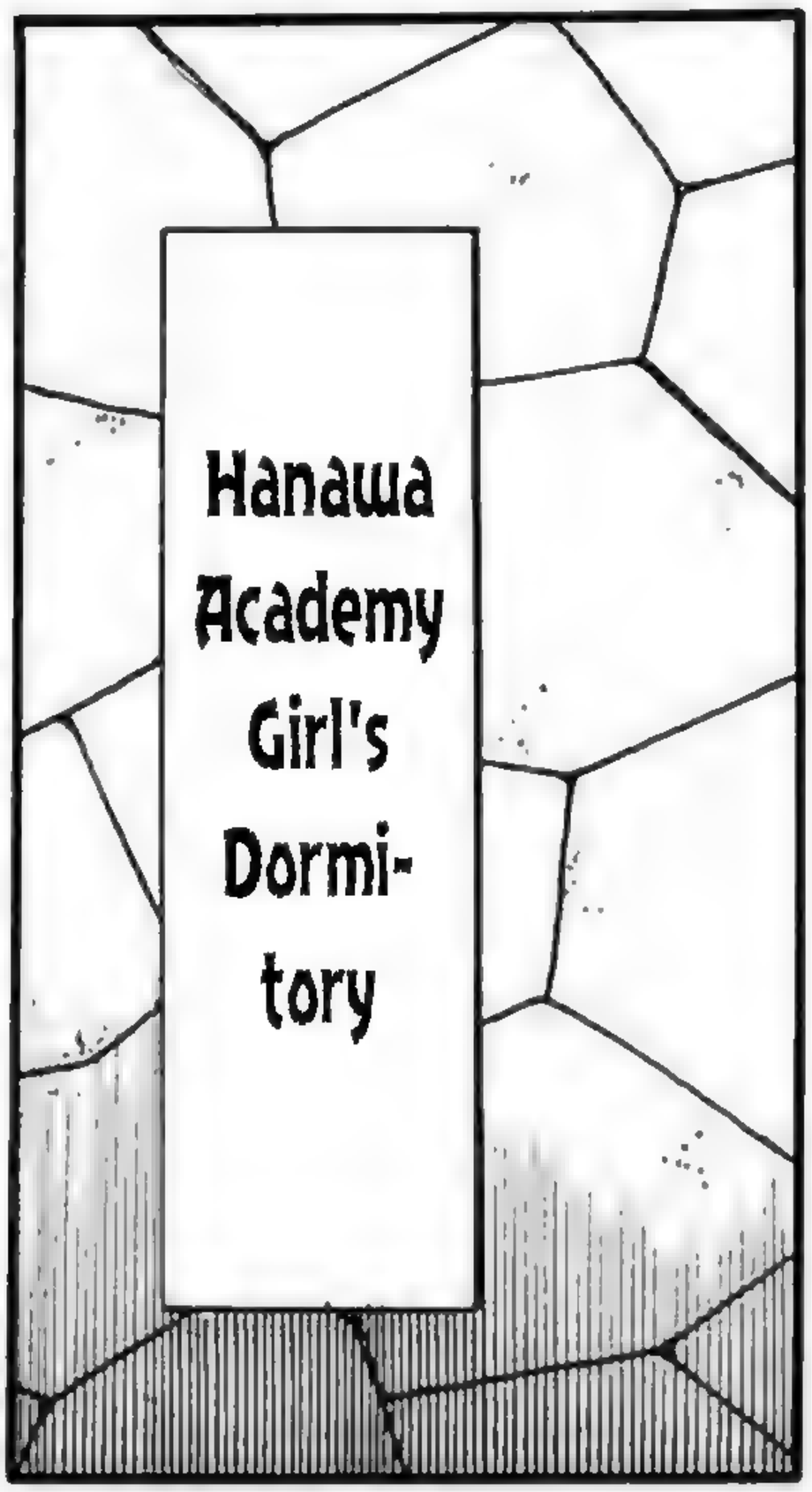
7 The Academy of Terror



And Yuri's not here either?
Wait, what?! She's not here!?
They sent in sick leave notes.
Year 1
Yep, they're both absent.
That's strange. They're both absent...
Ah, no... It's fine...
Did you need something from them?

OK,
let's
go...!!

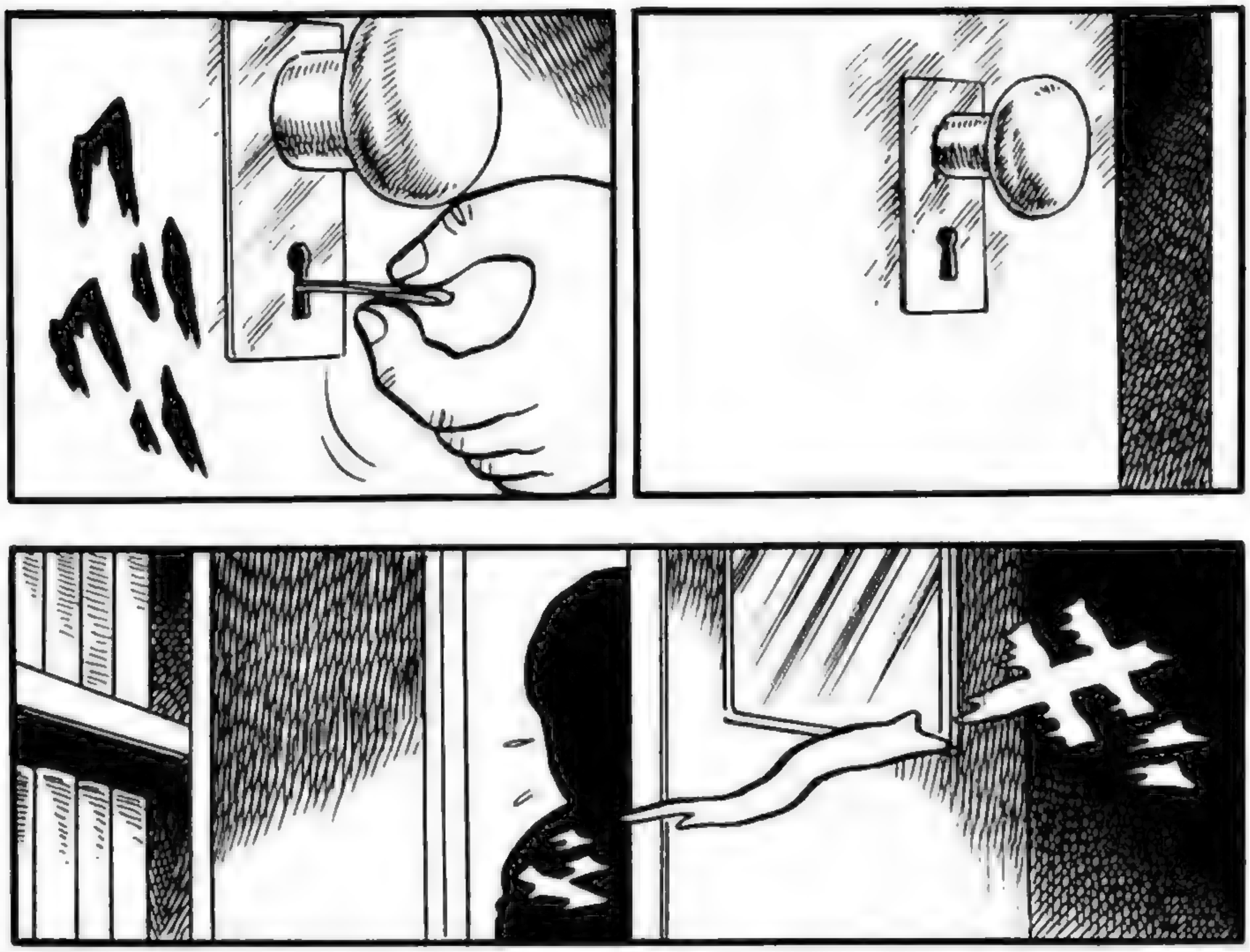



Hanawa
Academy
Girl's
Dormi-
tory

...!!

1-3

Shirai
Aki



She's not here! Her room's empty!!

1-3

Yuri Kuro-numa

Huh? Yuri's not in her room either...!!

They're both gone...

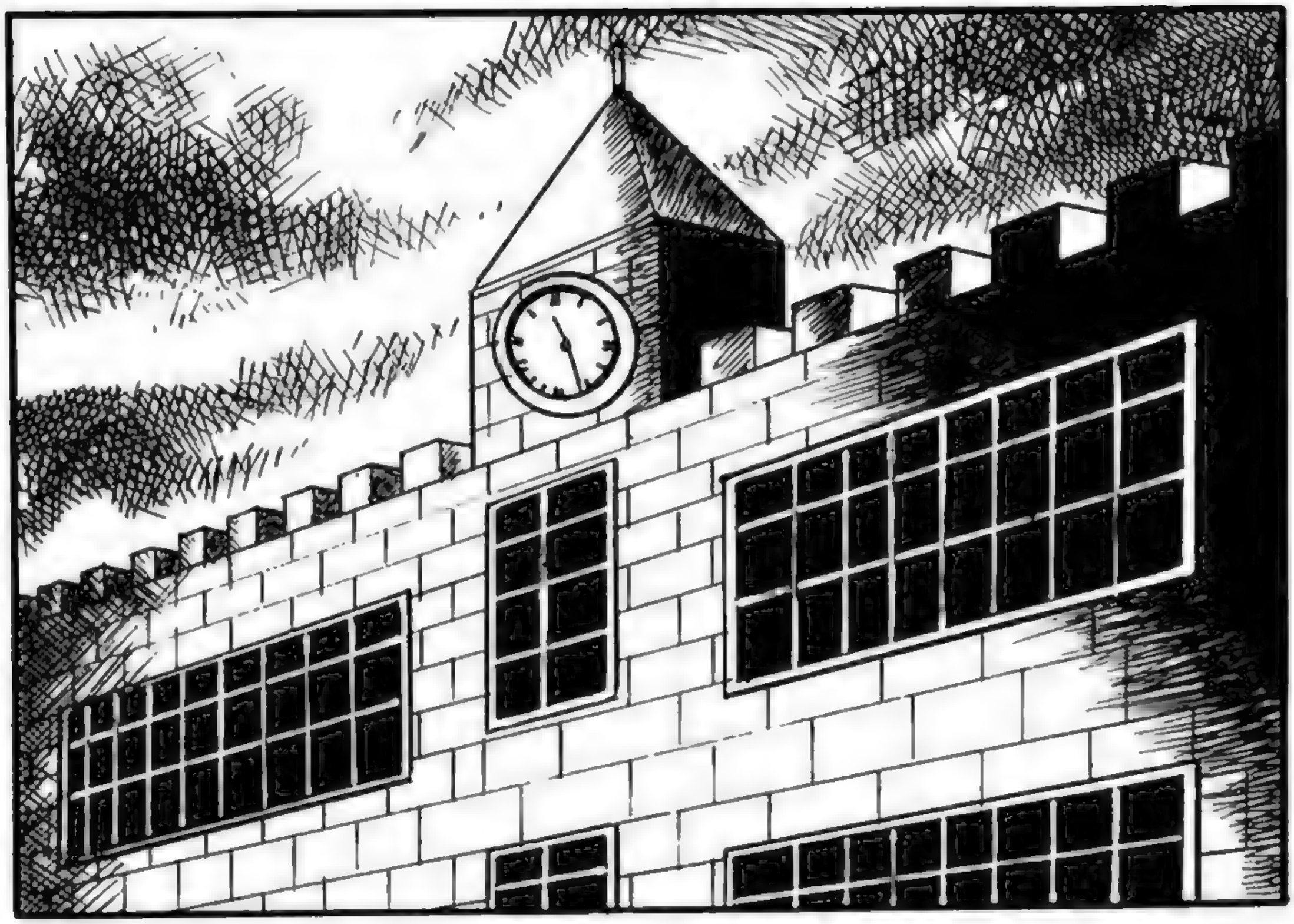
This is really strange... Something's going on!

That's it!!

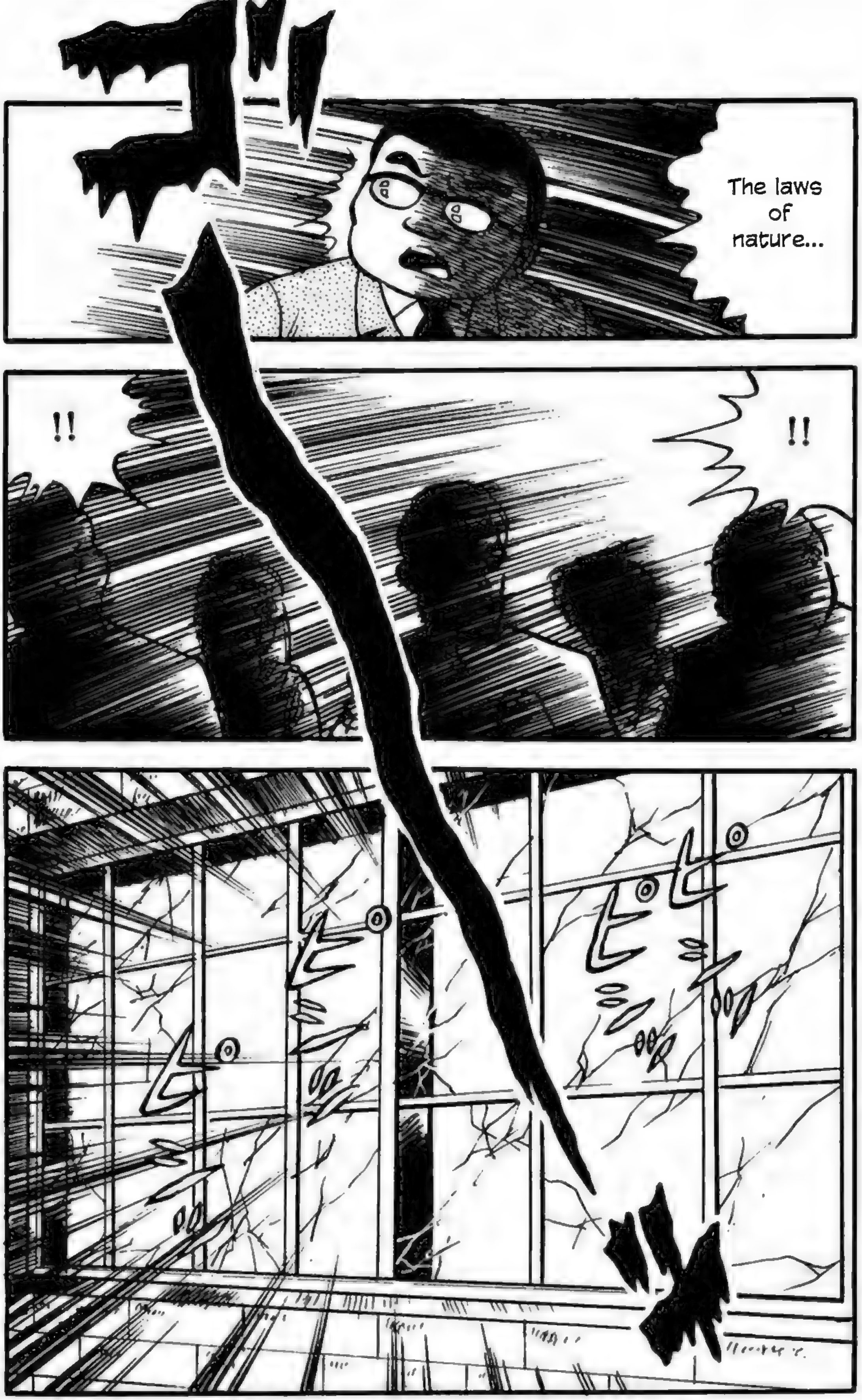
OK!!

ZOOO

Hah
Hah!!
I need to hurry! Something terrible might've happened!!



And from that point on...


The laws of nature...
!!
!!

What on Earth...!!
EEK!!
AH!!

OH MY GOD!!

KYAAH!!

UWAAAA!!

GYAAA!!

AHHHH...!!

UWAA!!

AWA...!!

EEK!!
WHOA!!

KYAH!!

UWAA!!

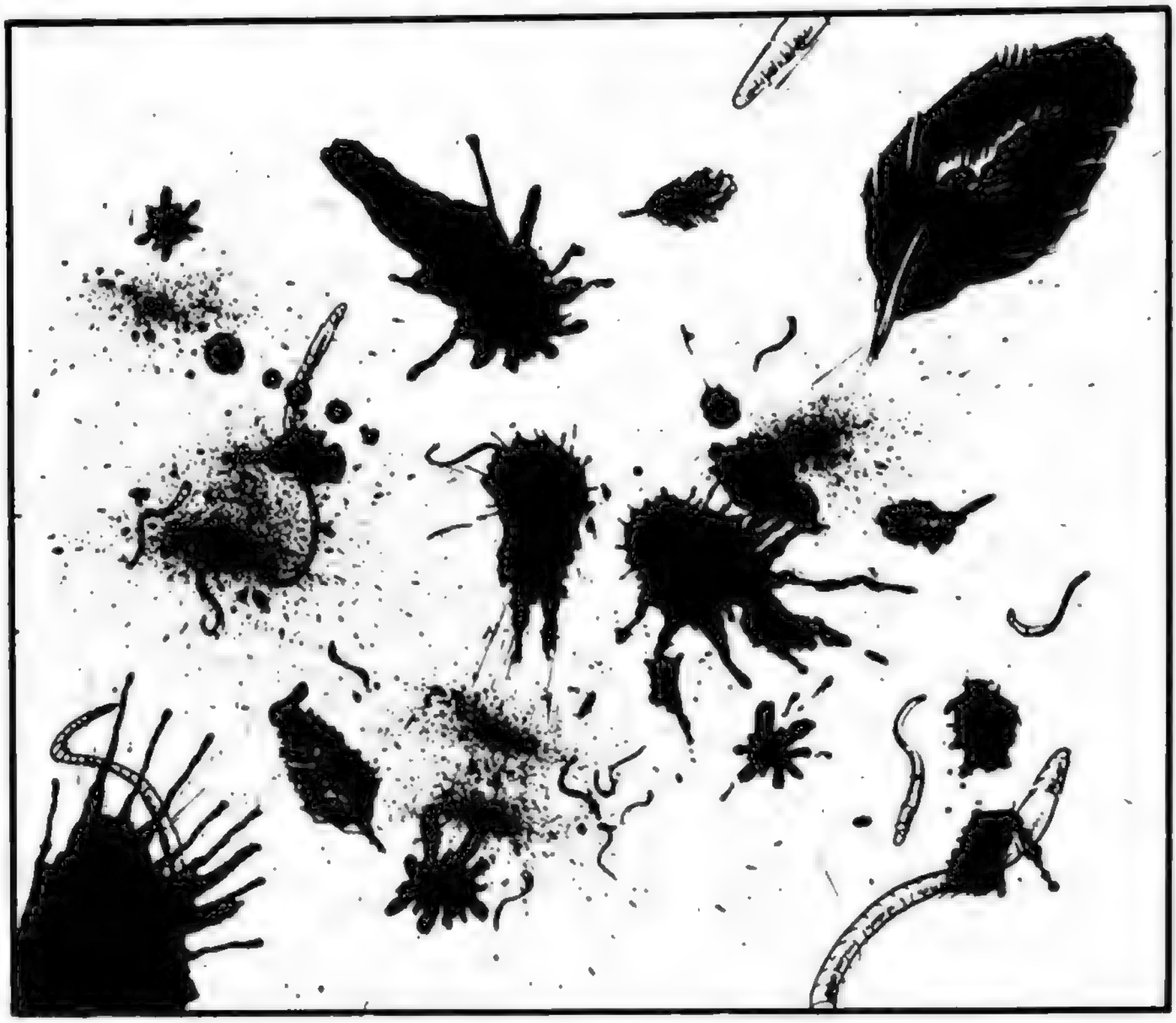
AHHH...!!

OH GOD!!

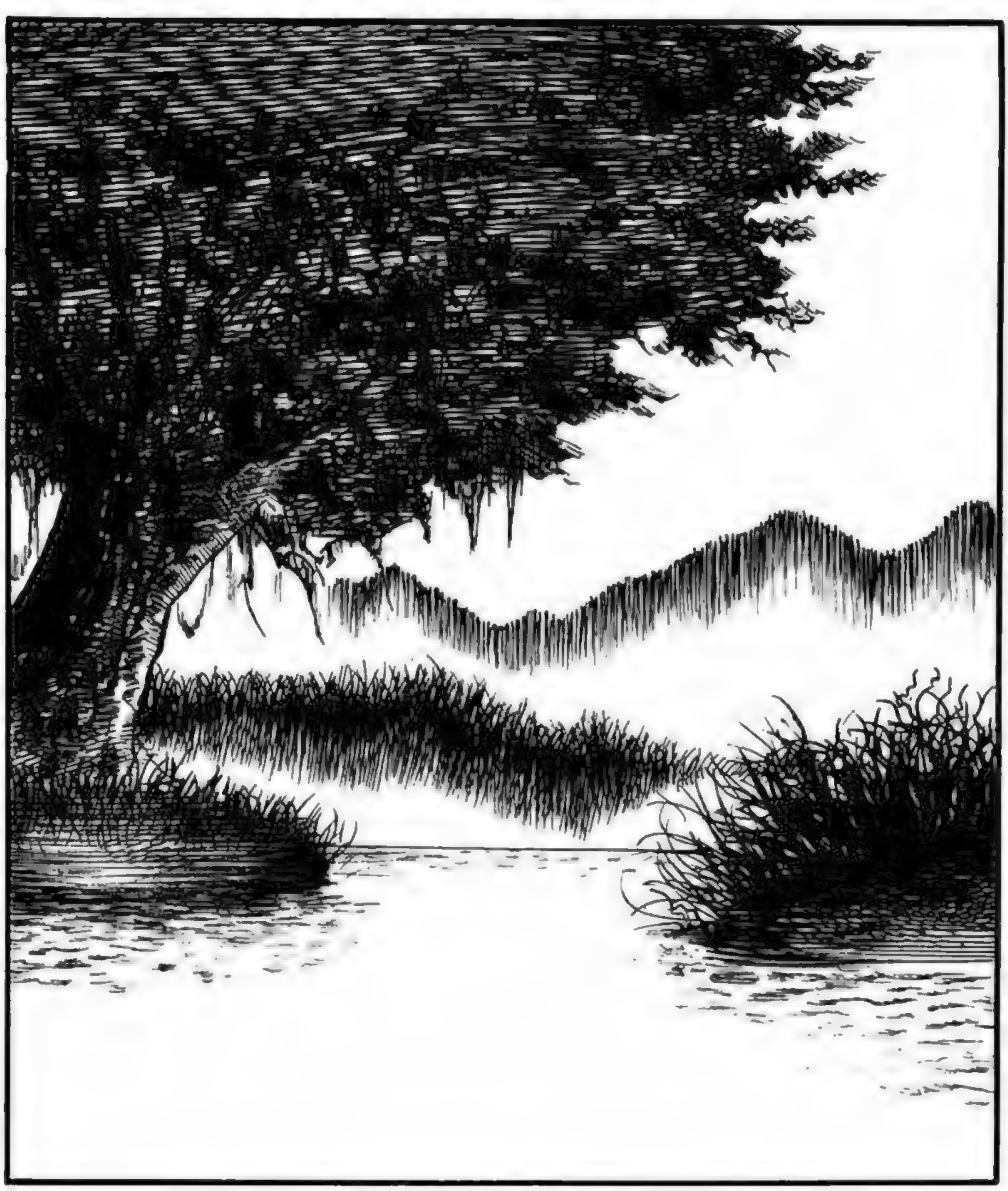
It's in your class too, Yoshida?!
Nakamura!? Nakamura!!

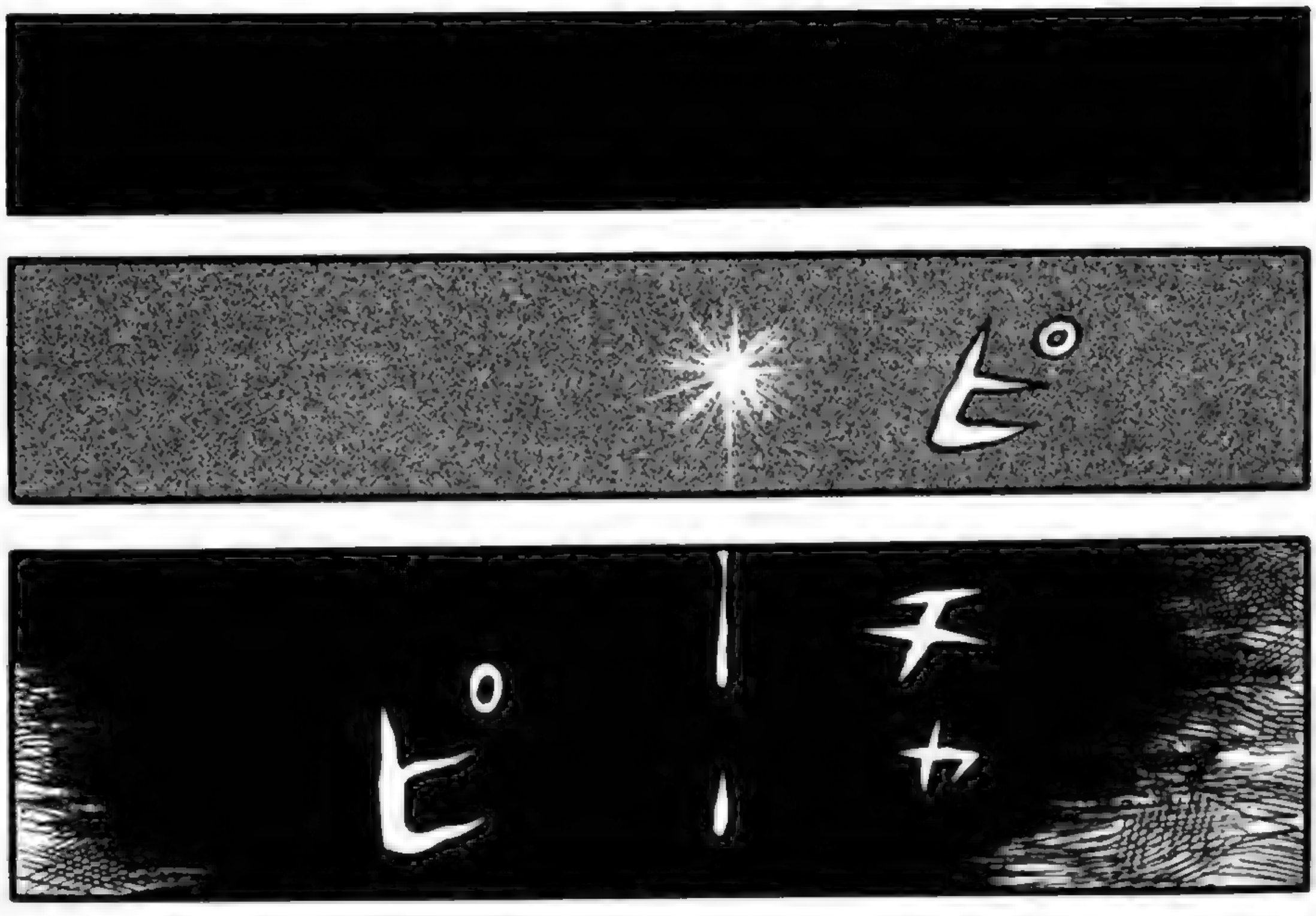
It's everywhere!!
The entire school is in chaos!!

What the hell is going on?!
Oh God...!!



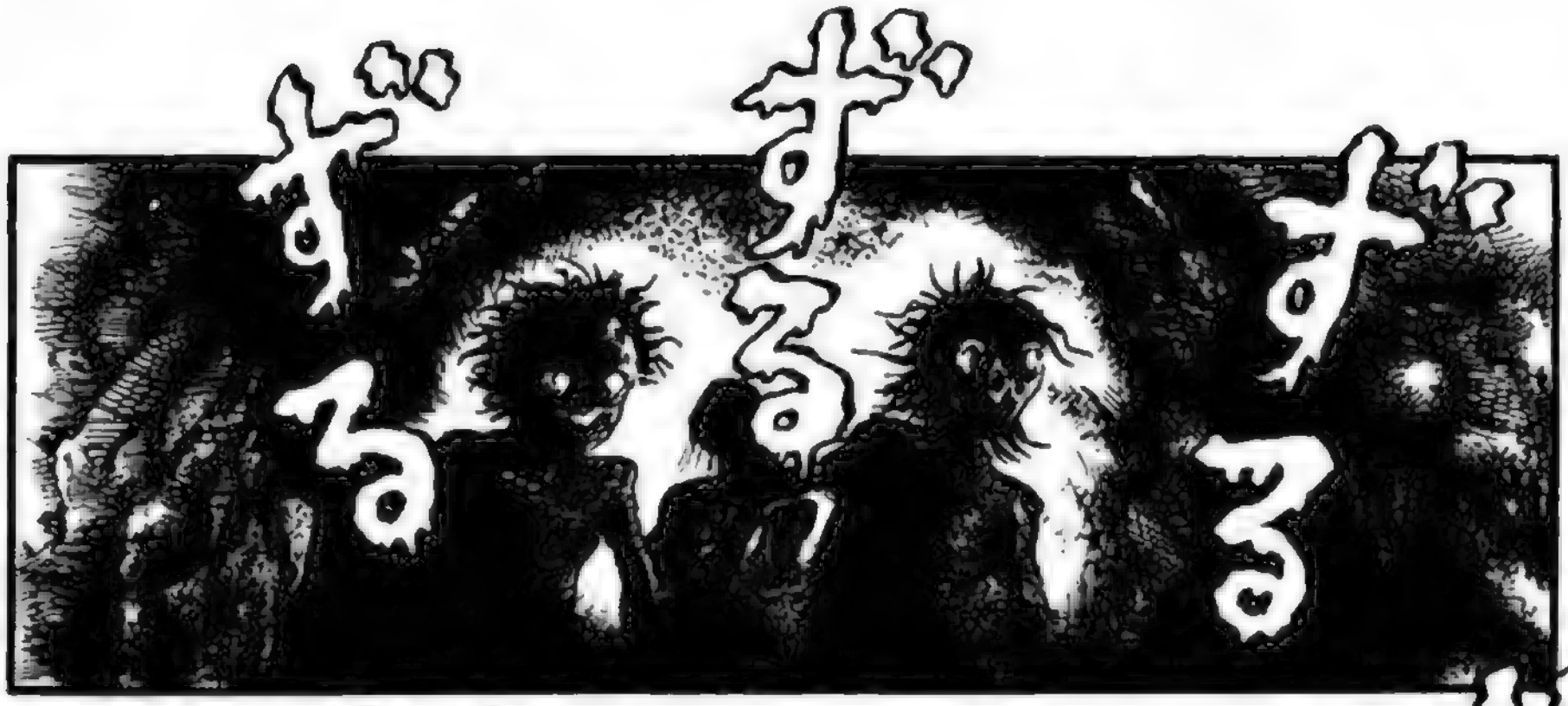
8 The Offering of The Dead Spirits




OH!!

Huh...
Where
am I?!

AH!!



Hee Hee
Hee...

AH!!

I'm going to drain every single drop of blood from you!! Your flesh will be torn from your body and you'll be offered as a sacrifice!!

Yuri!!

It's to strengthen the power of our clan!

Why?! Why are you doing this?!

I'll never forget...!!

Oh, you may have forgotten, but...

What?! Who are you?!

The agony and despair I felt as I was slowly devoured by the fish...

I laid there rotting away in the depths of the water...

You could never understand my torment!!

AH!!

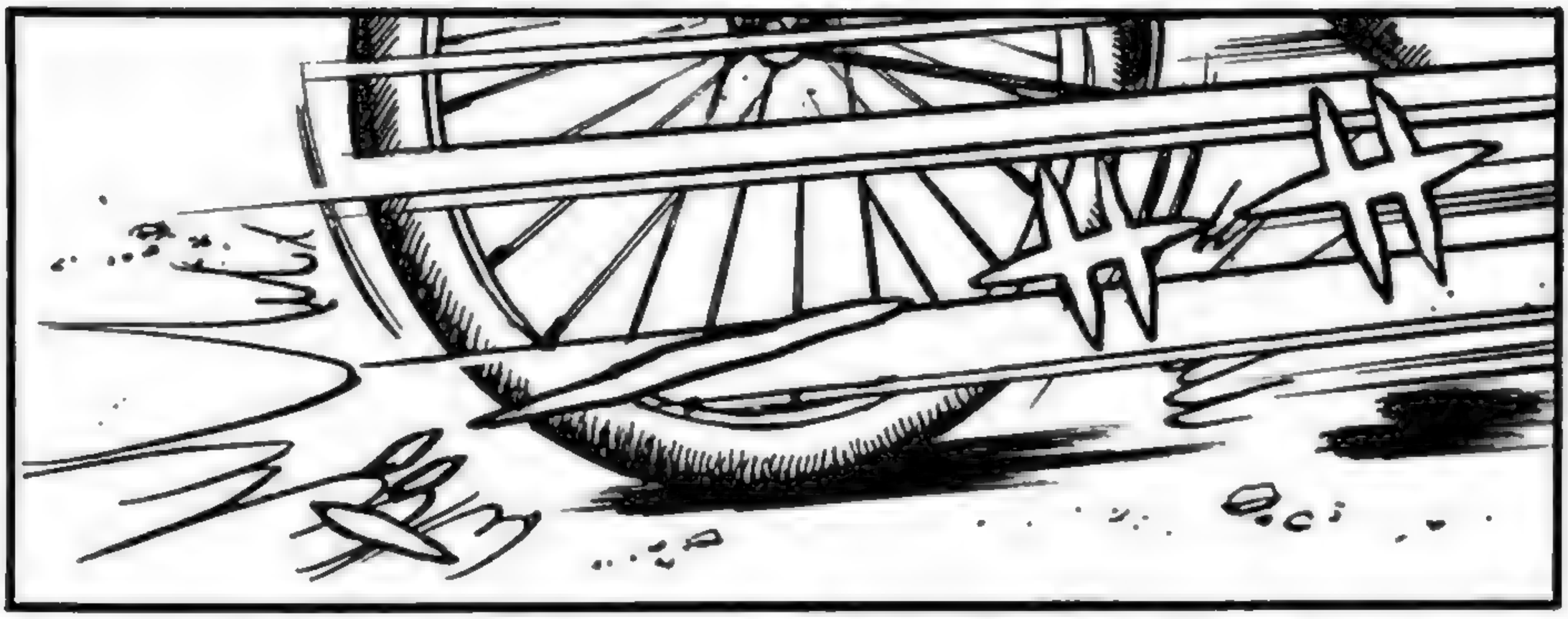
ぐっ
ぐっ
ぐっ

I'll drain your blood!! I'll tear your flesh apart!! And we will feast on you!!

No!!
Nooo...!!

Someone, please save me!!
Help me!!

9 The True Identity of Yuri Kuronuma



Paranormal Research Institute

Mr. Takayanagi!! Sensei!!

Oh, I remember you. You're from Hanawa Academy...you came here before to ask me questions about supernatural phenomenon, right? Is something wrong?

Sensei! There is something I think is very important I need to show you!!

This... This is...!!

Oh...!

President Shirai!!

Mr. Takayanagi, what is going on?!

You're one of our students! What are you doing here?!

Oh! Um... Sir! Presi-dent!!

W-what... That's Yuri Kuronuma!!

I came to show sensei this!

Y-yes sir! Um... To tell the truth...

Alright, explain yourself right now!!

What...!? What do you mean by this!?

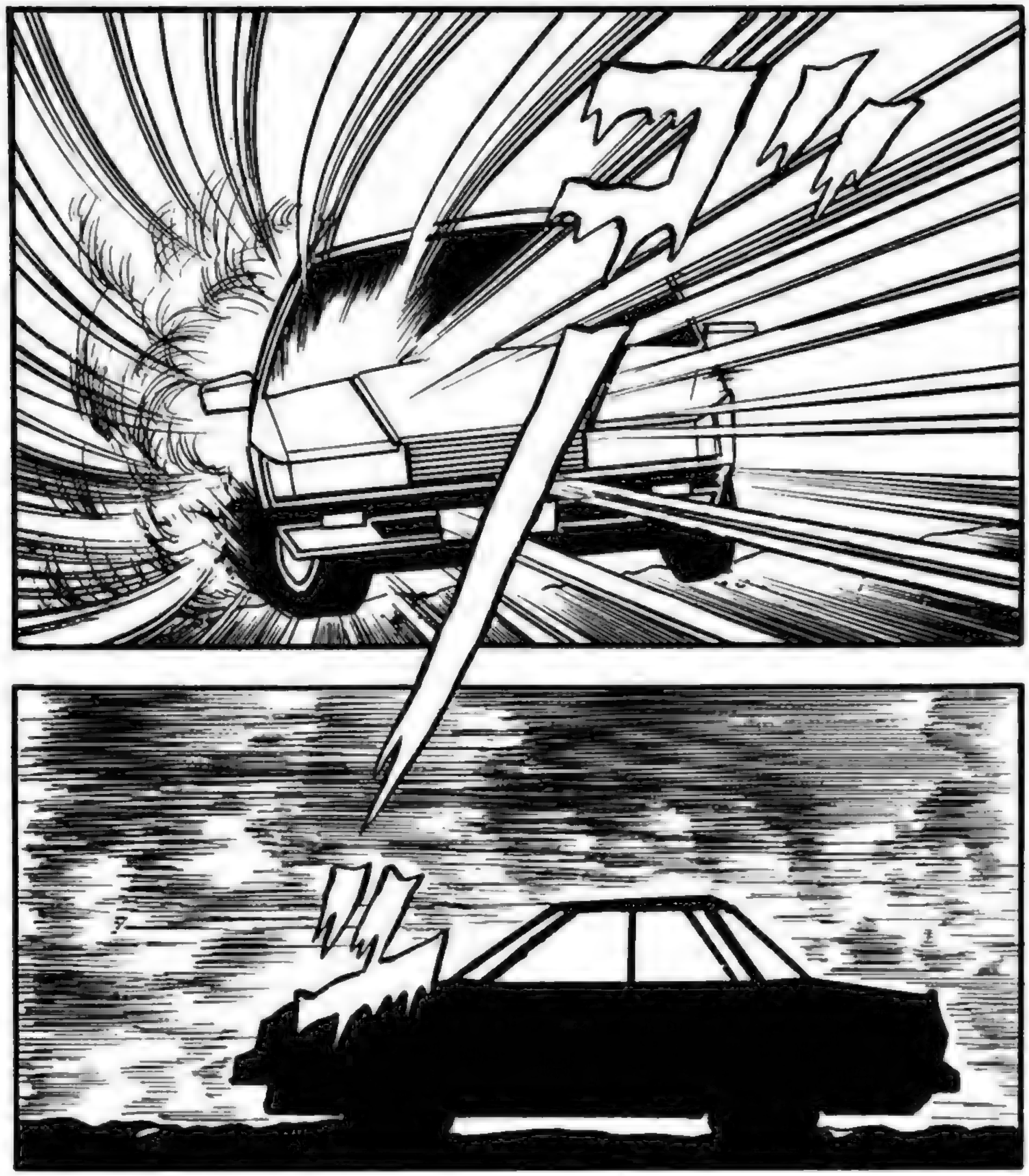
Sir, we need to hurry, the young miss is in danger!

Takaya-nagi!!

Aki is my daughter!!

The young miss...?

Shirai!!
Oh yeah! His last name is...



An ancient manu-script!

There is an ancient manuscript passed down through the generations within the Shirai family...

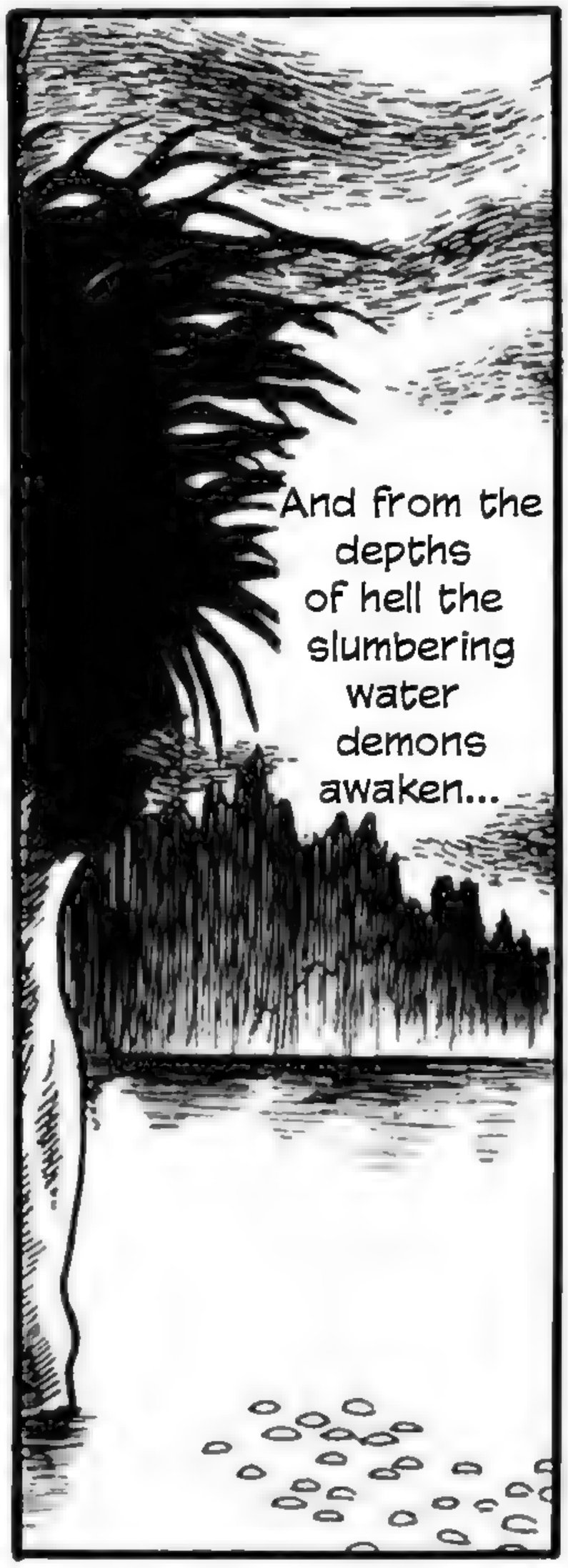
Beneath the Torii gate of the black swamp...

When Yuri transferred to our school, she sparked memories of the manuscript in my mind...

The full moon seems to bleed a crimson hue...

There is a solitary black lily that blooms in the night.

These water demons pull upwards from the abyss a colossal shell, that radiates a kaleidoscope of colors as they pry it open...


And from the depths of hell the slumbering water demons awaken...

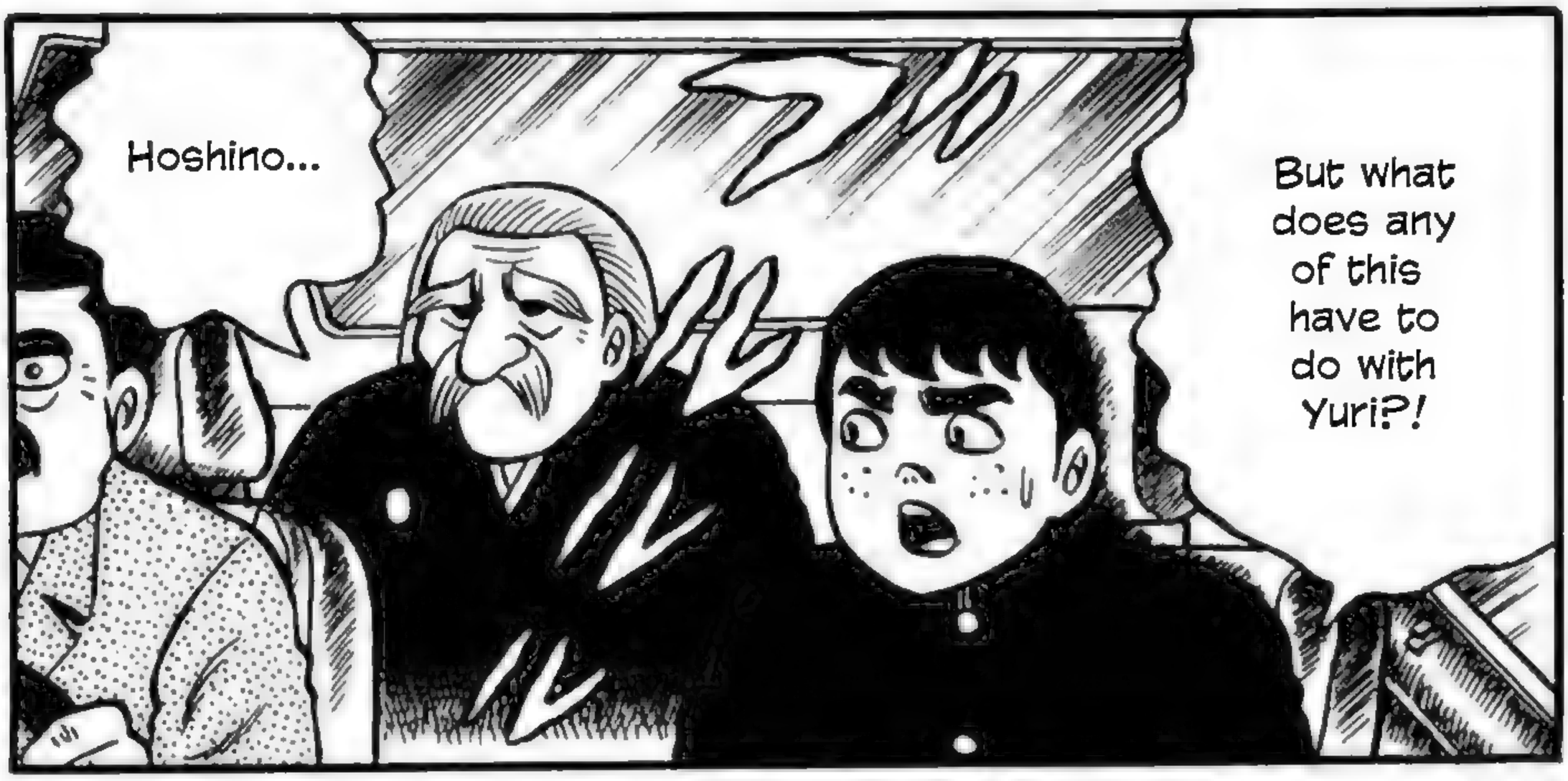
But, do not be deceived by her enchanting beauty.

And from within the shell emerges a lady so lovely she could be mistaken for an angel...

Beneath her mask of beauty lies the venomous fangs of a wicked spirit of the abyss.

For her true form is that of a flesh-eating demon.

The Princess of Hell...
And she is...


Hoshino...
But what does any of this have to do with Yuri?!

Huh?!

Yuri is not of this world!!

As a parting gift from the underworld, let me at least reveal to you my true identity... Then your suffering and fear will soar to even greater heights...

...

This is the treasured blade passed down through generations of my family! Do you recognize this crest?!

That is the Black Lily crest!!

And you the Shirai family's crest is a wreath of flowers... the Hanawa!!

Yes! It's the crest of the Kuronuma clan!

Oh, are you finally remembering Princess Aki?!

!!

It was long ago during the chaotic Sengoku era...

Princess Yuri!

I was the daughter of the of the Lord of Kuronuma castle.

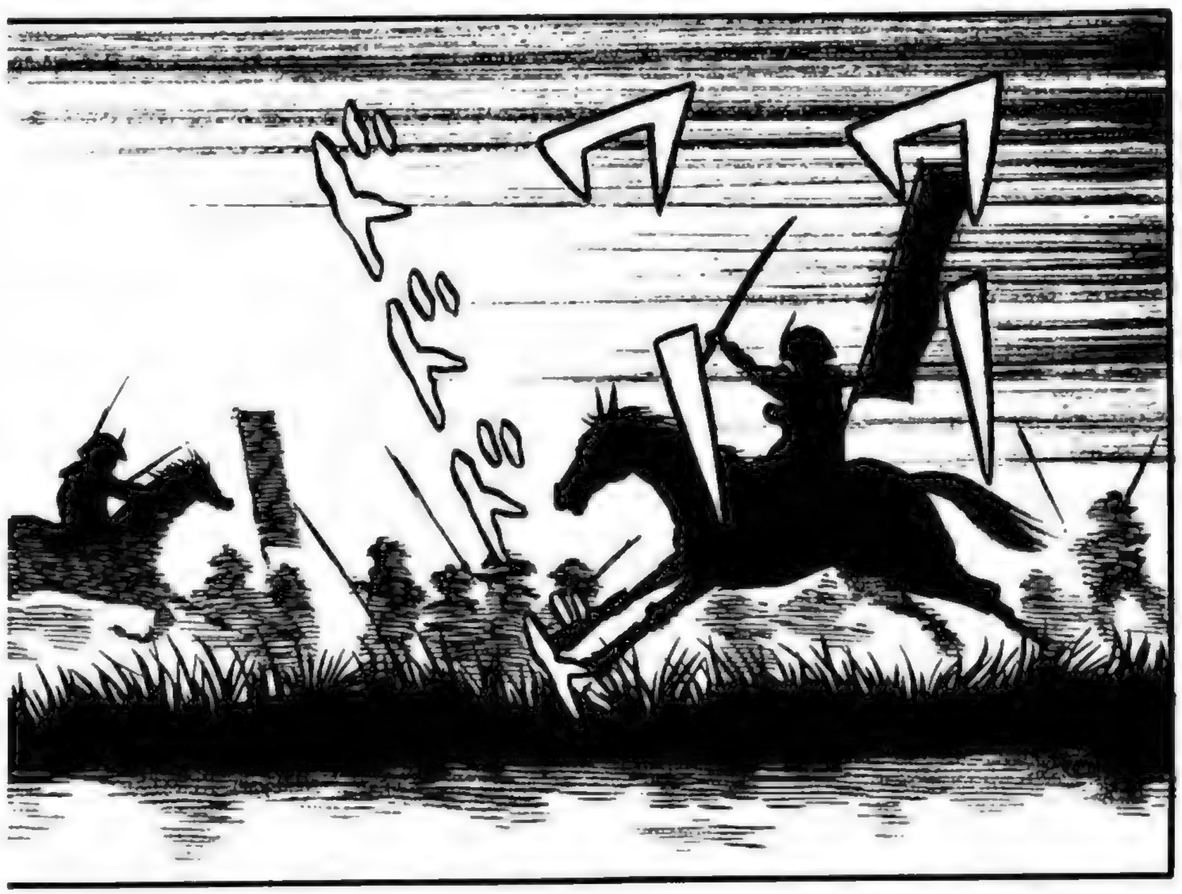
We, the Kuronuma clan had built our castle by the banks of the black swamp.

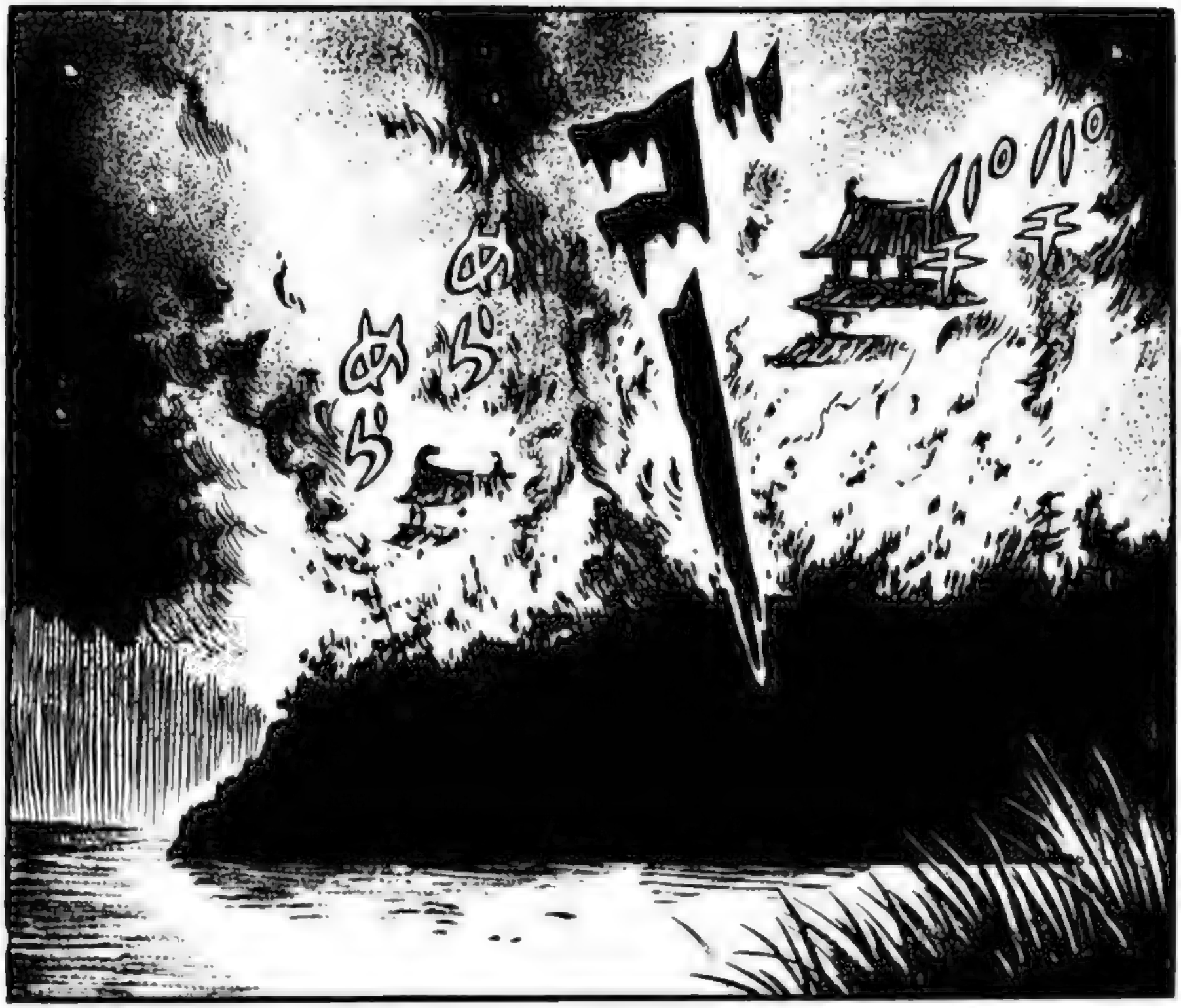
And you Aki, are the reincarnation of her spirit!!

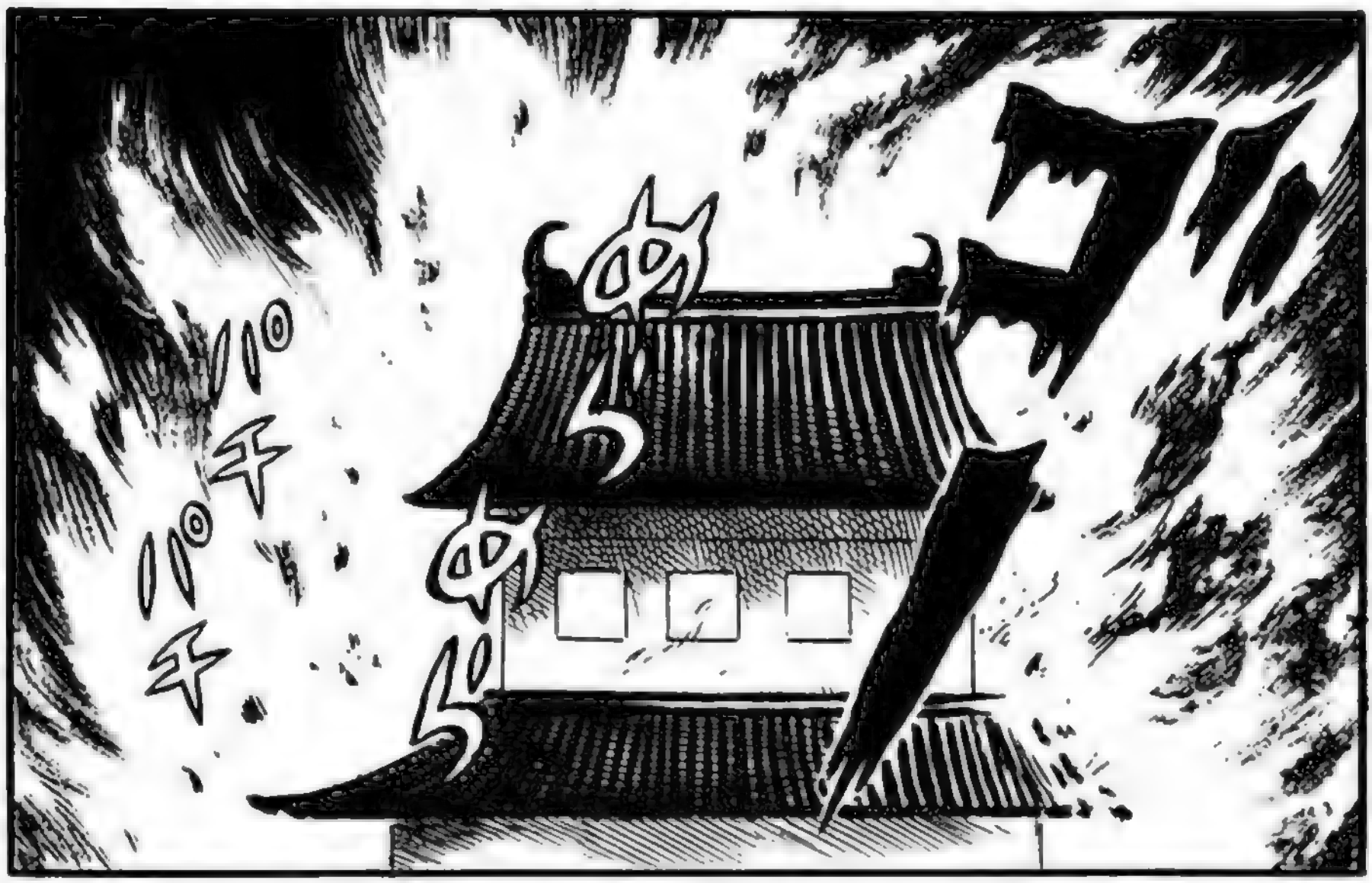
...

And the Lord of that castle, Shirai Naginori had a daughter also... Princess Aki!

The Shirai clan, our sworn enemies erected their castle on the formidable Hanawa mountain.







Princess...!! The time draws near! Prepare yourself for what must be done...!!

Uuugh... Uuuu...

This is unforgiv-able!

Cursed Shirai clan!!

We shall accompany the Princess to the very end!

Princess, the Lord and the Lady of the house have already taken their lives!

Uuuu...!!

Uuuu...!!

Uuu...!!

With our vengeful spirits, we shall resurrect the sacred crest of the Black Lily!

Mark my words Shirai clan, one day you will feel our wrath!!

Prin-cess!!

Your highness!!

Until that day, I shall slumber in the womb of our Mother, the Black Swamp!!

Princess!!

While others commited seppuku as they jumped in...

Some followed me without any hesitation...

Hoping fervently for the revival of our clan...

Believing that one day, the crest of the Black Lily would rise again!!

And so, the blood spilled by my clan stained the Black Swamp a vivid crimson...

The wails of our tragic end echoed hauntingly through the swamps waters...

All this time, we have been waiting in the depths of the Black Swamp, suffering through hellish torment!!

The Kuro-numa clan perished that day, while your clan thrived...

tremble

Ahhh...

I shall offer your blood and flesh as a sacrifice to this treasured blade passed down through my family!!

Now the time for our vengeance has come!!

AHHH...!!

DIE!!

Kyaaah...!!

10 The Cries of the Dead Spirits

The Torii has been burnt down!!

Does that mean that Yuri is behind all this!?

This was built by our ancestors out of fear of the curse of Kuronuma clan!

According to the ancient text there should be a secret cave close by...

We must hurry! Aki's life is in grave danger!

I can feel a chilling aura seeping up from the depths of the earth...

Without a doubt this is all true!!

!!

Mathematics Homework Book

Shirai A.

W-what did you say...?!

This... This is Aki's...!!

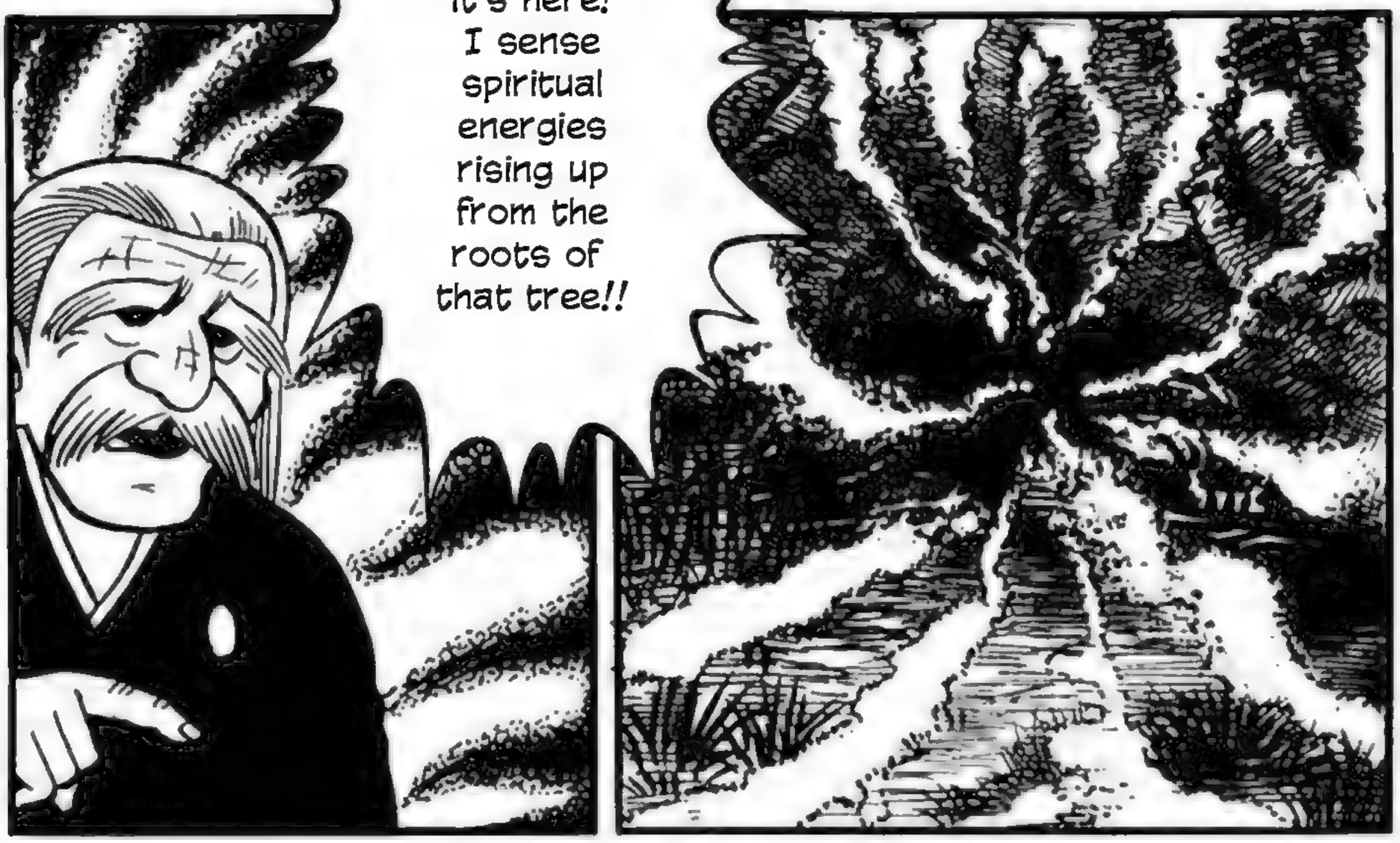
Ah!!

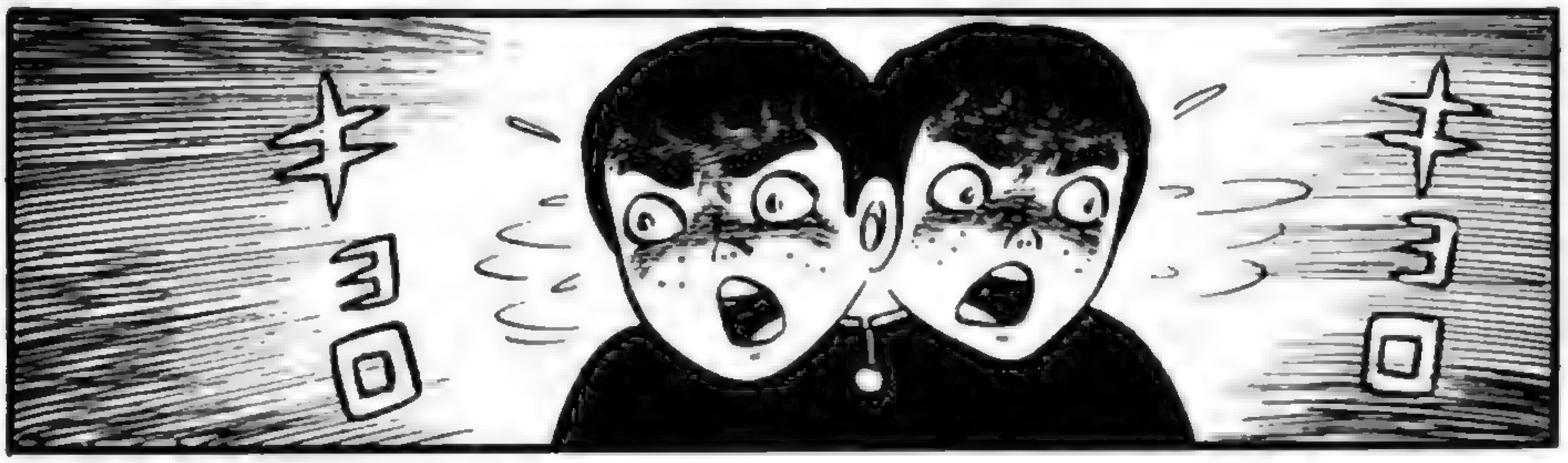
I can hear her!! I can hear Aki's voice!!

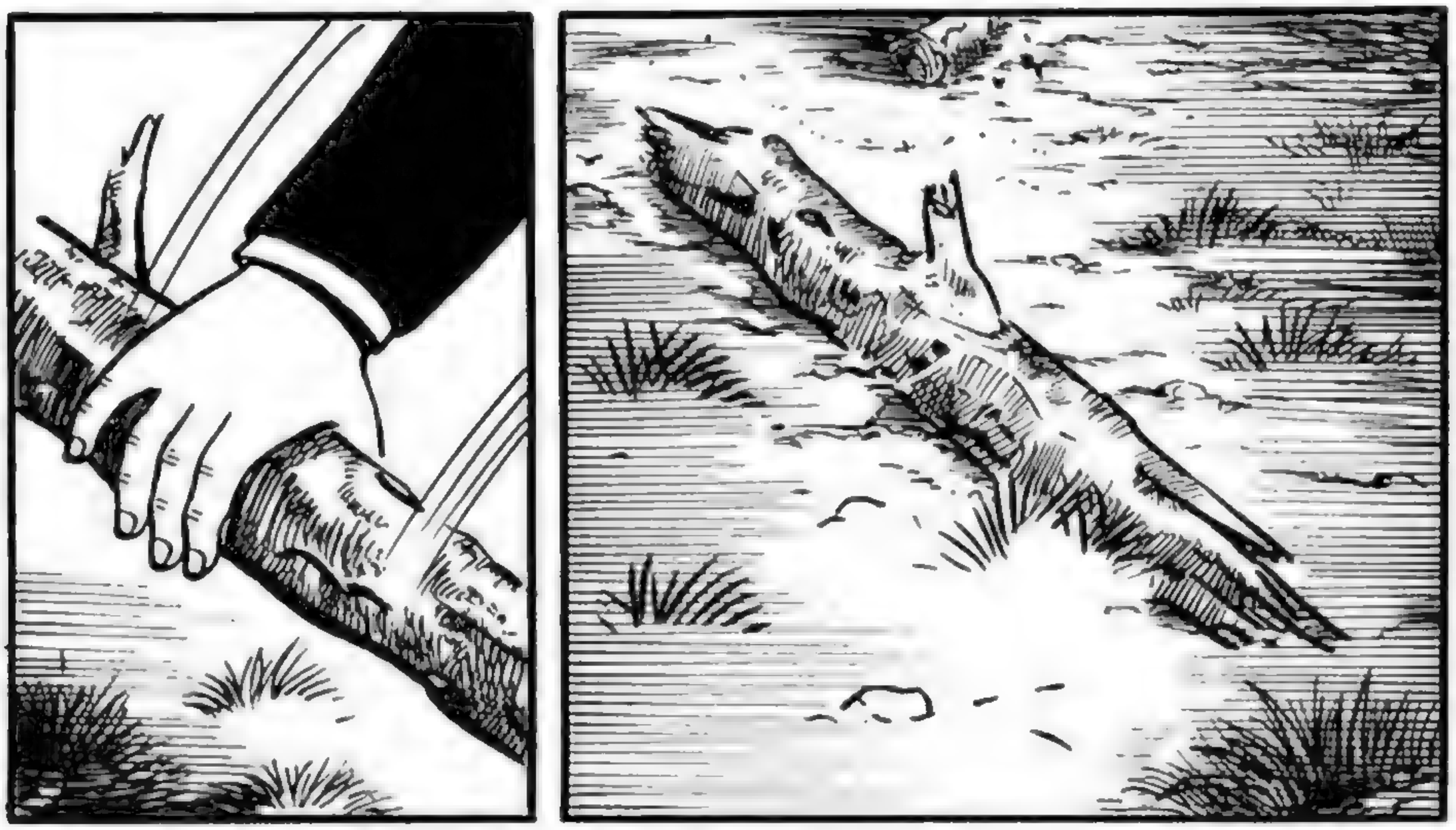
It's hers! That's Aki's, I know it!!

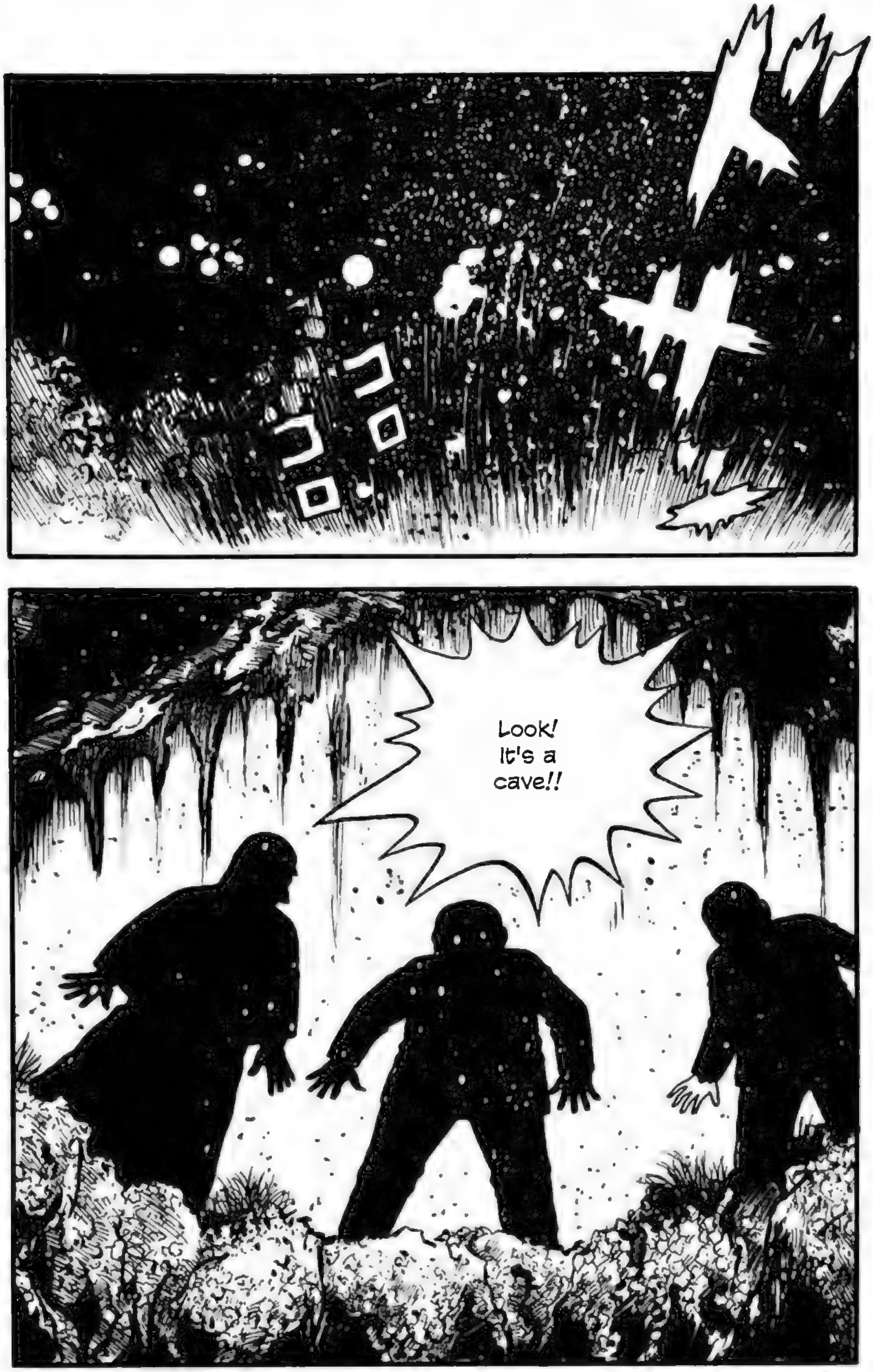
This pendant...?!

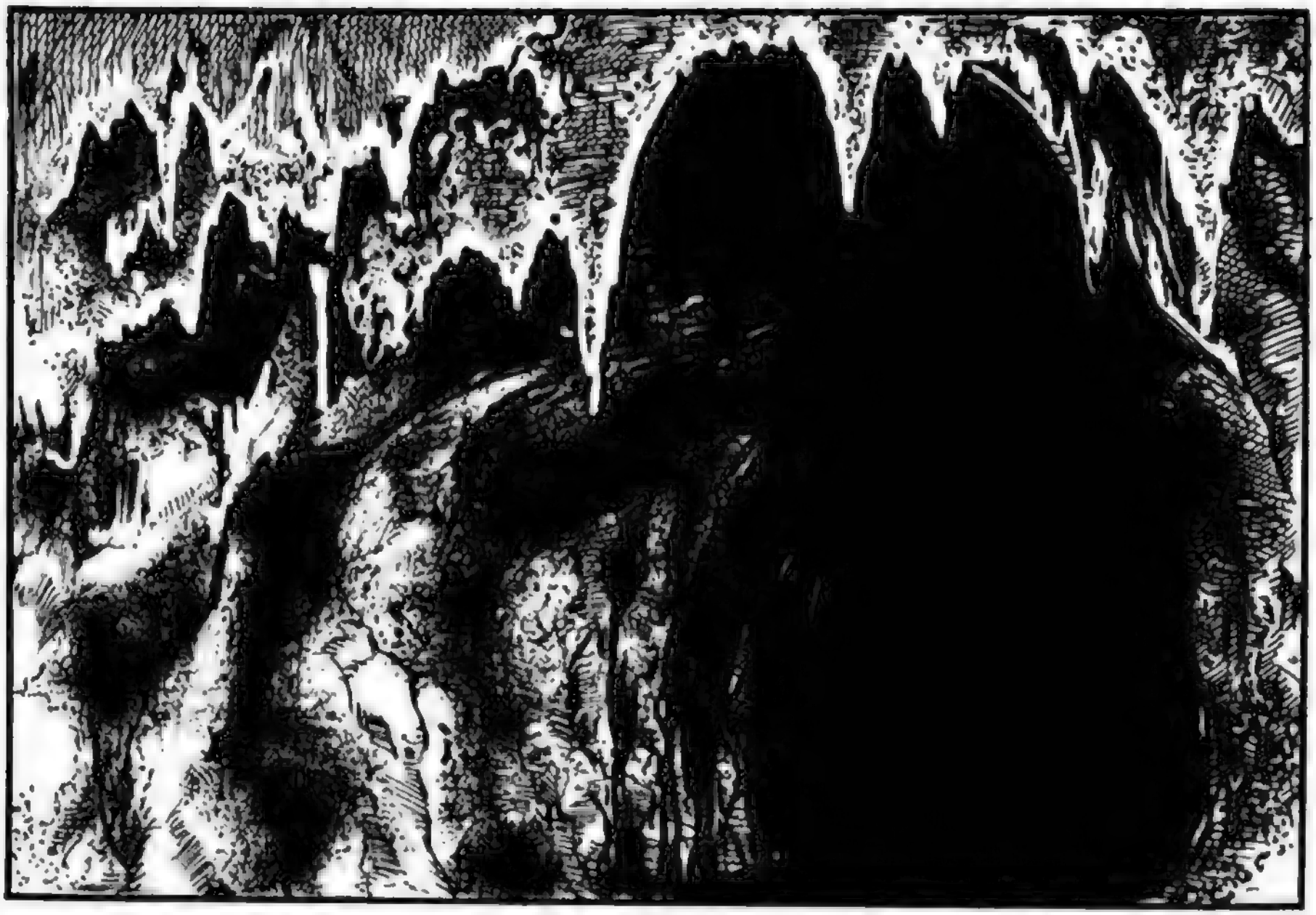
It's here! I sense spiritual energies rising up from the roots of that tree!!

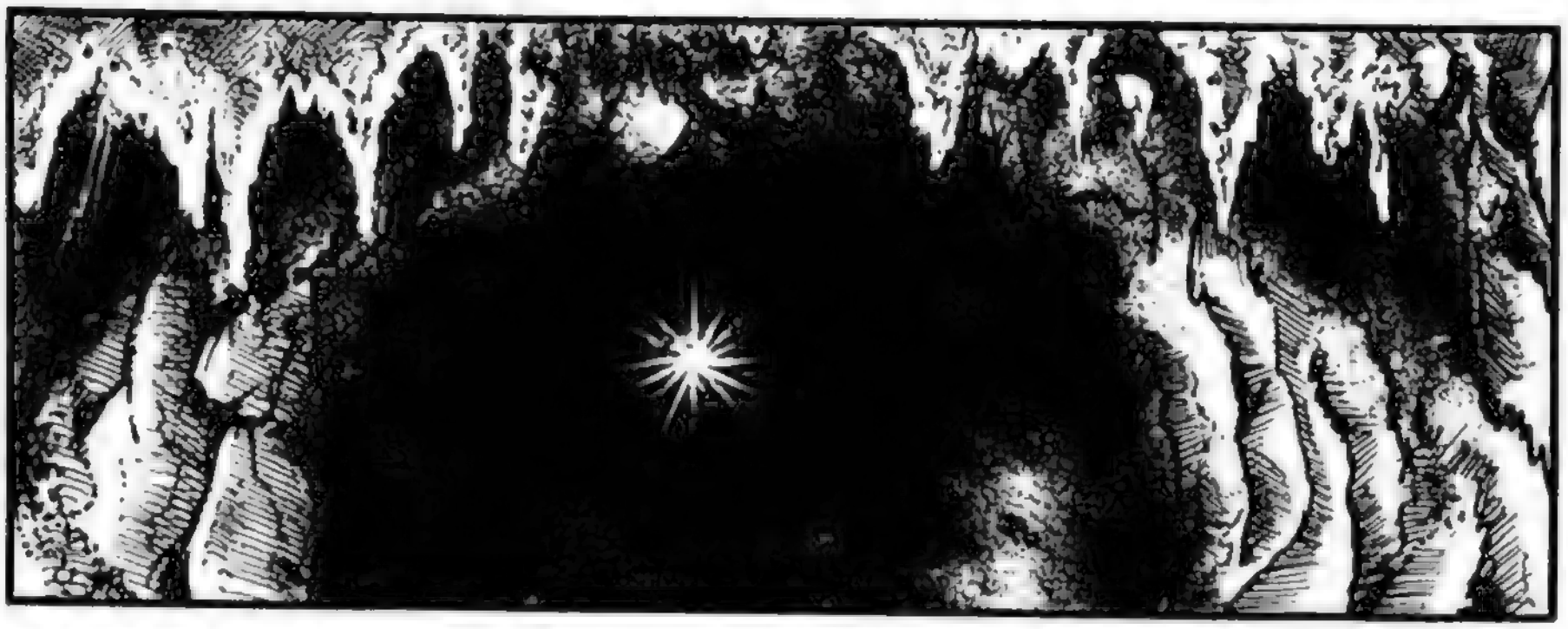


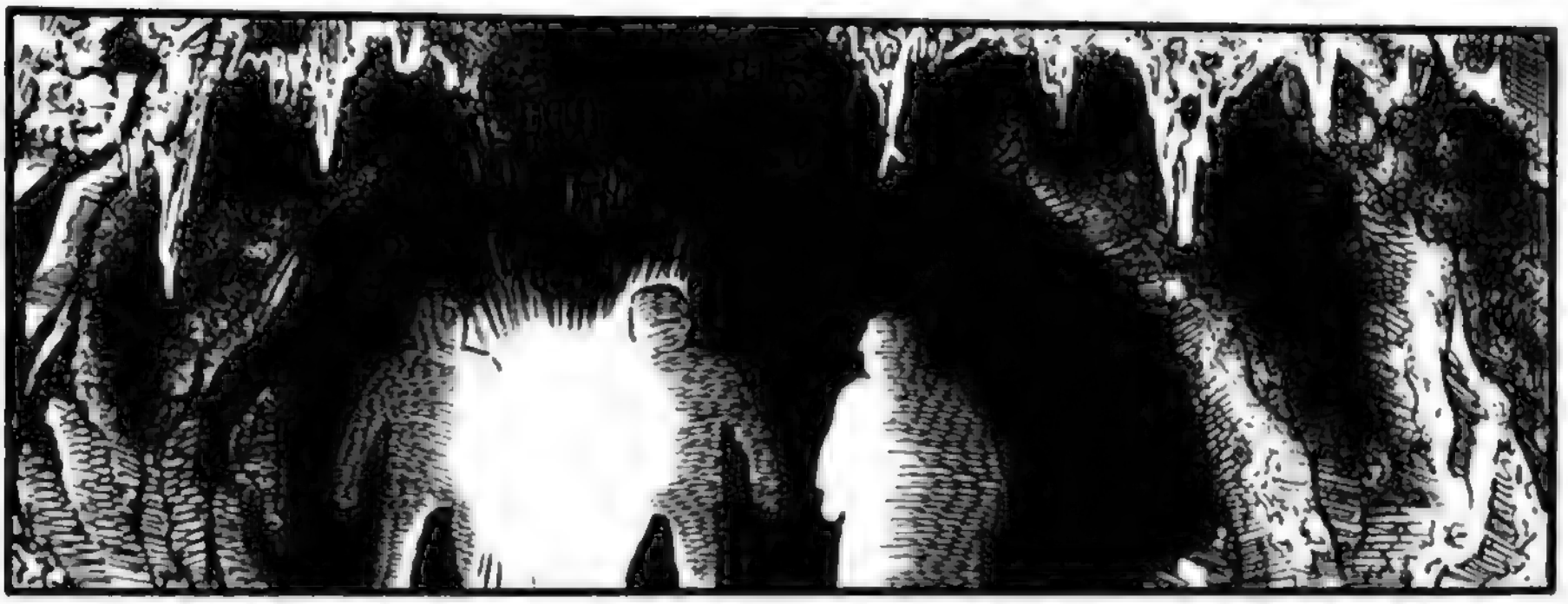





Look!
It's a
cave!!







...

...

The energies are getting stronger!

We're getting close!

chatter
chatter

Prepare yourself!!

Hee Hee... At last the time has come!!

Please!!
Stop!!

No!!
Help!!

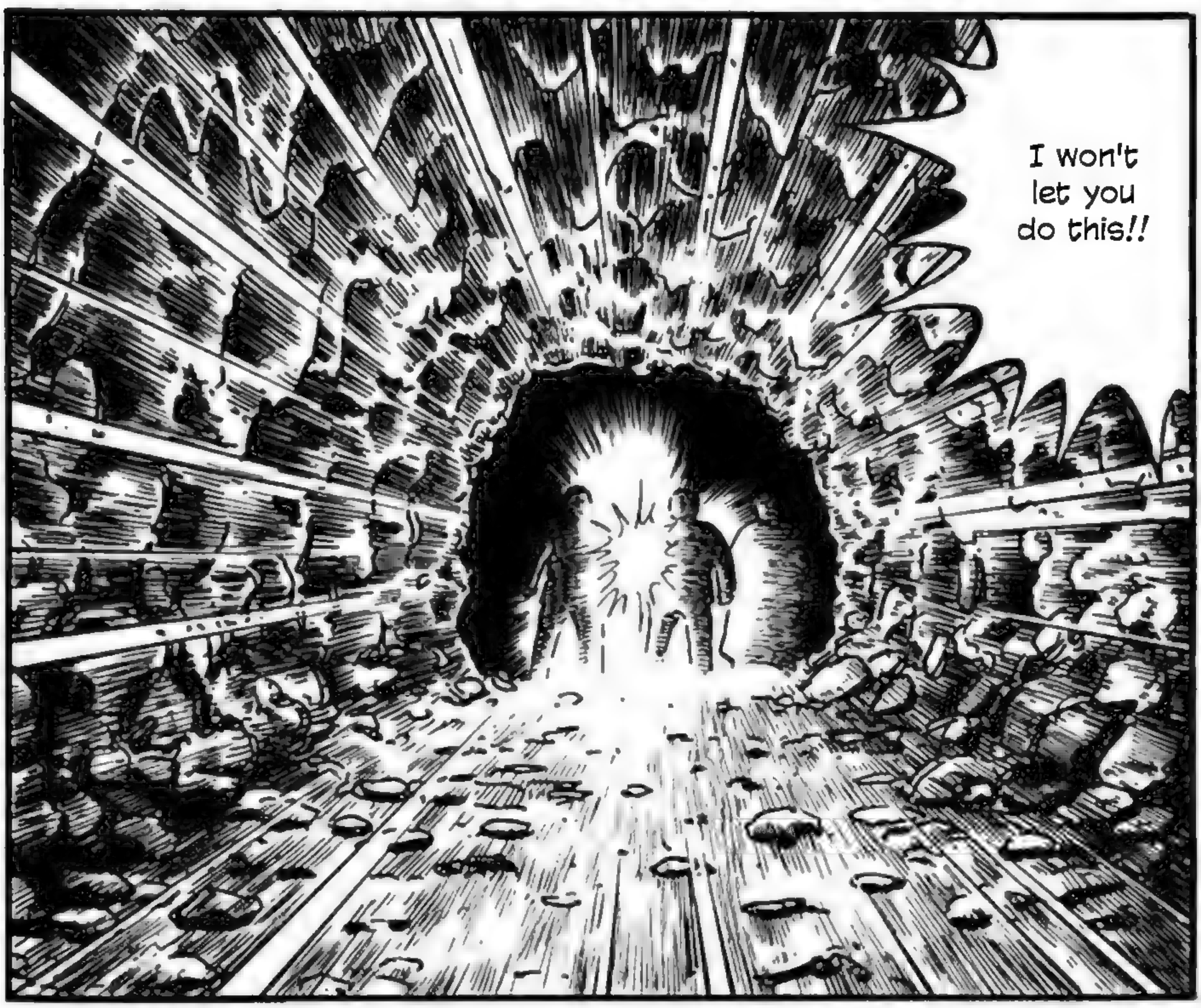
The time to resurrect our clan of the Black Swamp has come!!

Never!
Your flesh and blood will be offered to our sacred blade!

!!
!!

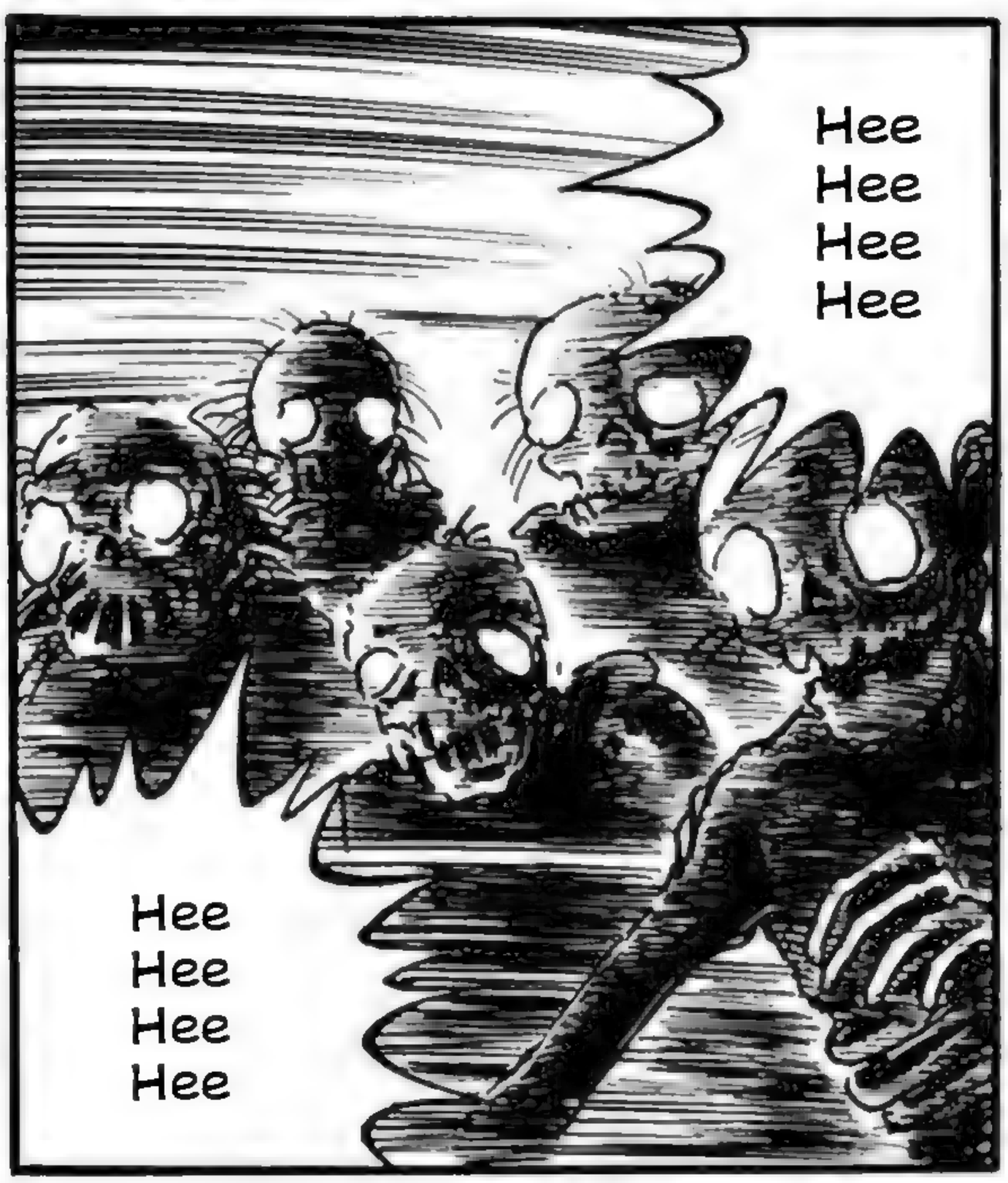
Get ready!!

Stop
right
there!!


I won't
let you
do this!!

Who are you?!

You wicked spirit!!


Hee
Hee
Hee
Hee
Hee
Hee
Hee
Hee

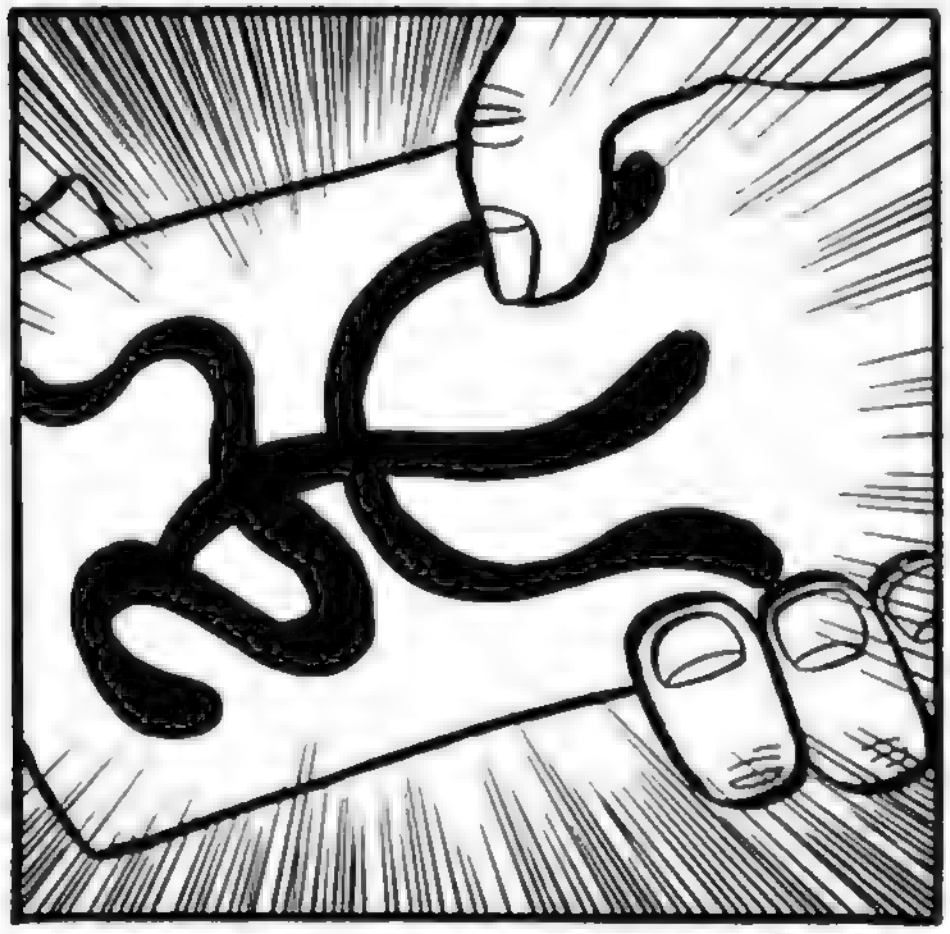
You bastards! Tear them limb from limb!! Kill them!!

Behold!!

AHH!!

GAH!!

!!



Stay back!! Come any closer and I'll pierce Aki's heart!

DAD!!

AKI!!

Oh...

Hoshino, hurry use this divine rice!!

Y- yes!!

Take that you beast!!

ガッ

AHH!!

ヒ゜ヒ゜ヒ゜

Gyaa!!

Yes!!

Come on! Now's the time!

UGGHH!!

GWAAAH!!

Aki!!

Aki!!

You all came to save me!!

It's all over! It's OK now Aki!!

Now we must hurry and get out of here!!

I won't let you leave!!

Oh no! The talisman's been destroyed!

Without your silly talisman victory is ours!!

Hee Hee Hee!

Oh!!

...!!

AH!

Damn it!!

DIE!!

Ah!!

GYAAAA!!

AHHH!!

UGH!!

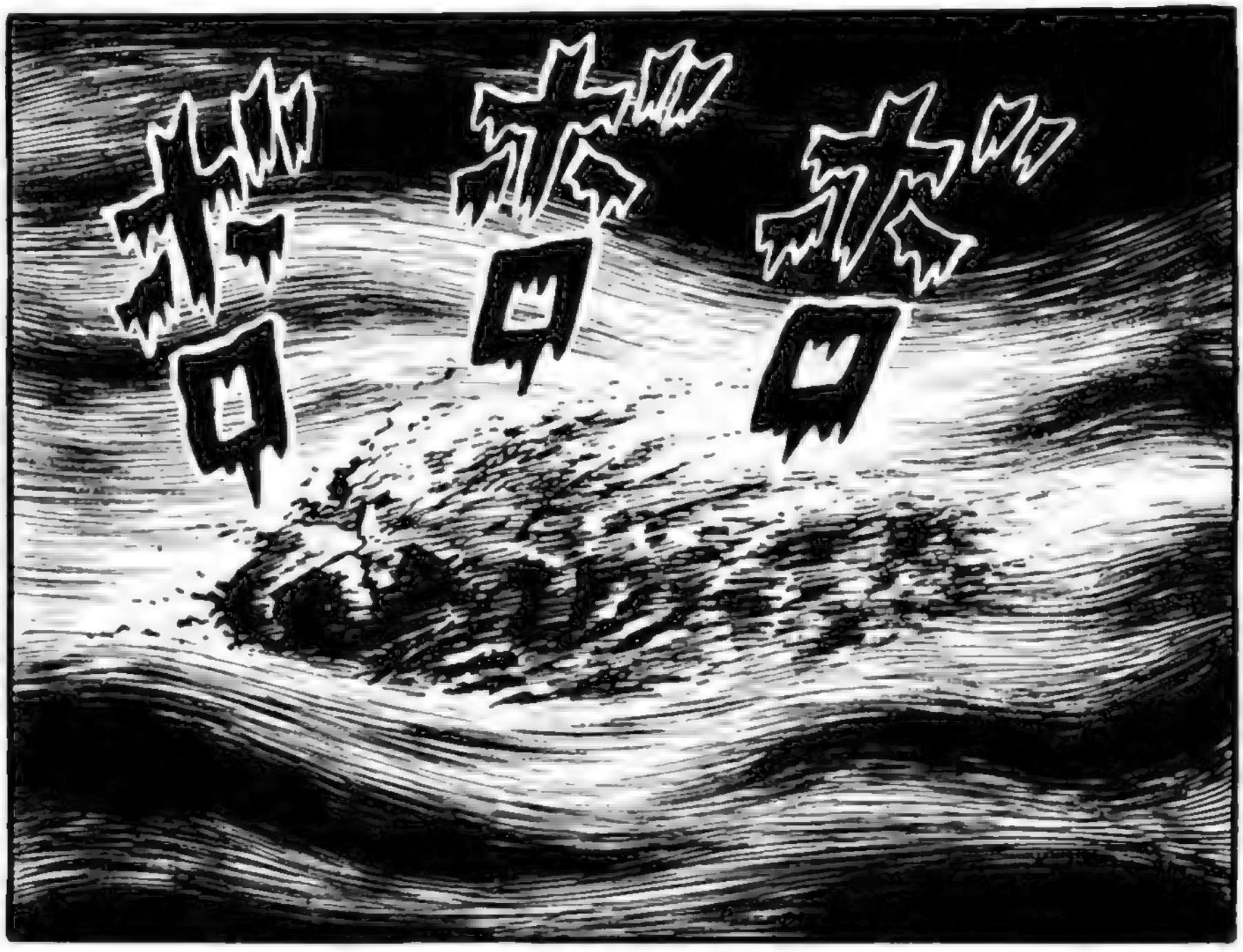
You... you bastard...

It's inscribed with a protective charm against evil spirits!

Sensei!!

Princess!!

Princess!!



GAHHH...!!

AHHH...!!

...!!

...!!

With her spirit destroyed this is their fate...

These wicked spirits were resurrected by the power of Princess Yuri's spirit...

And now these malevolent spirits will never rise again!!

But, now they have finally found peace at last.

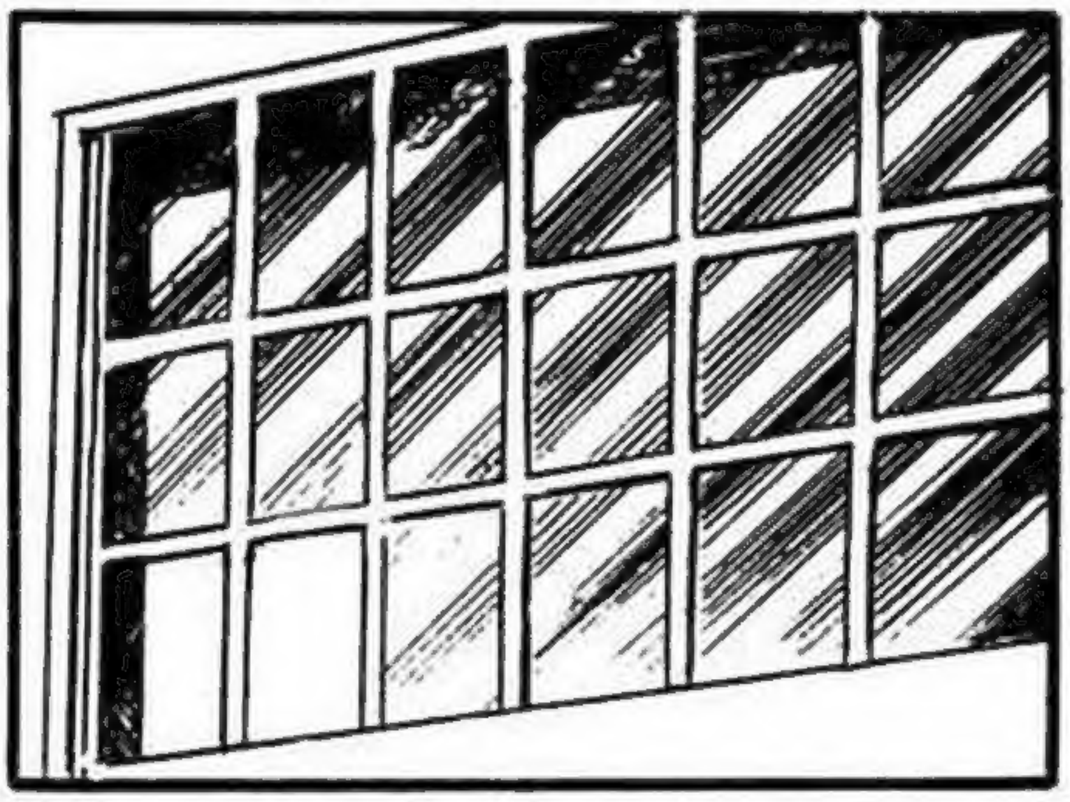
When you think about it, they were truly unfortunate souls...

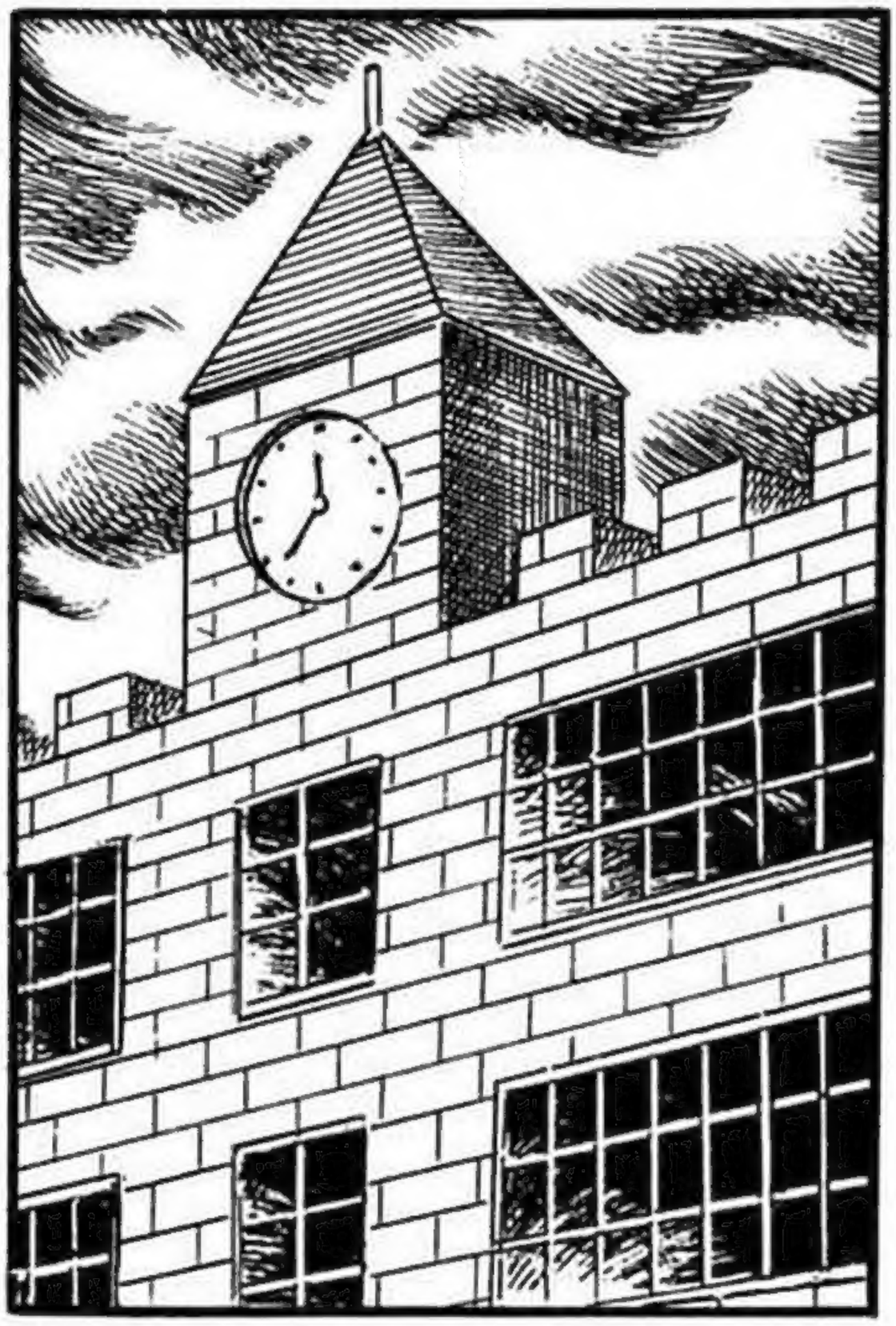
What the hell is going on...?!

All those bugs and crows just vanished into thin air!!

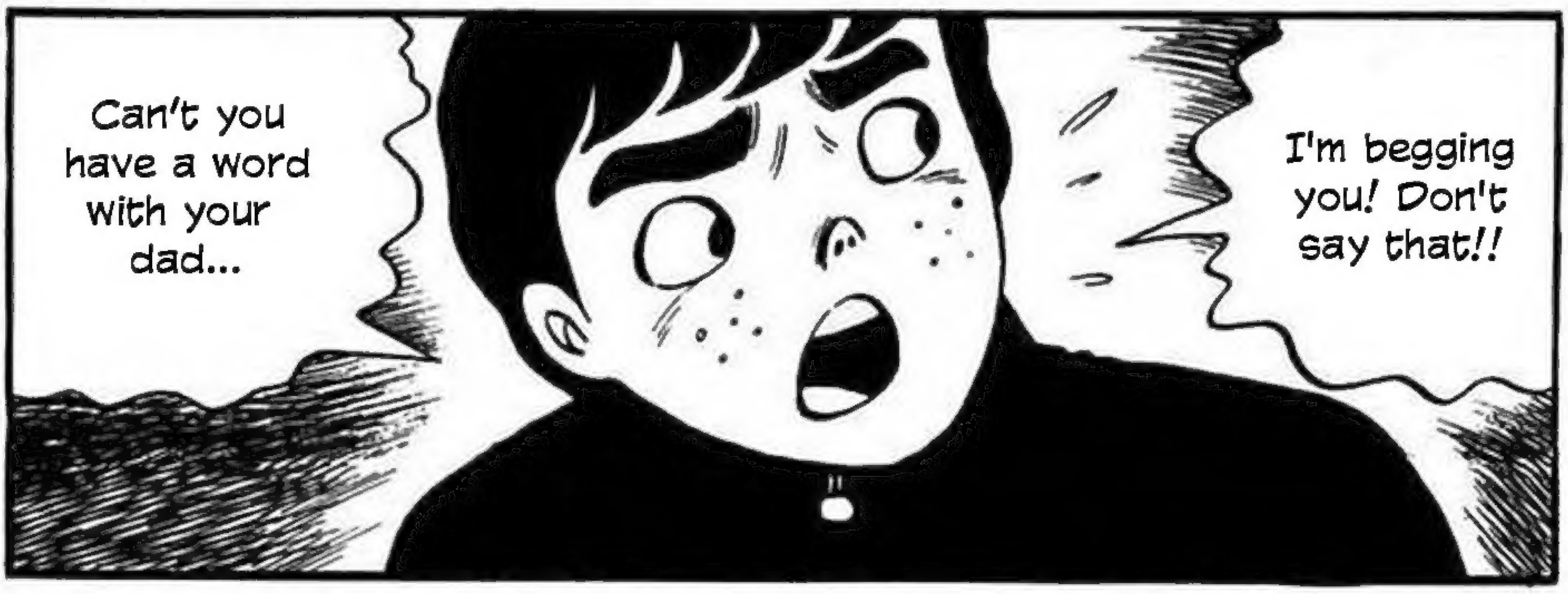
Huh?! What the...

Epilogue





Newspaper
Department


Can't you have a word with your dad...
I'm begging you! Don't say that!!

I can't ask him for something that stupid!

I knew it was impossible!

No way! That's not gonna happen!!

Waaah!

Has to take extra classes!

Anyone who gets a failing grade...

Of course not!

So there's really no way out, huh?

Ugh ...

I flunked math! Can you believe it?!

Besides, I'm taking extra classes too!!

Well, isn't this just delightful! Ha Ha Ha Ha Ha!!

What?! You too!! Seriously!?

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And so, peace returned to Hanawa Academy once more...
THE END